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「教廷與中華民國之外交關係  
(一九四二年至二〇一二年): 歷史、挑戰與前景」

The Diplomatic Relations between  
the Holy See and the Republic of China from 1942 to 2012:  
History, Challenges, and Perspectives

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Advisor : Chou-sengTou, Ph.D.

中華民國 101 年 06 月

June 2012

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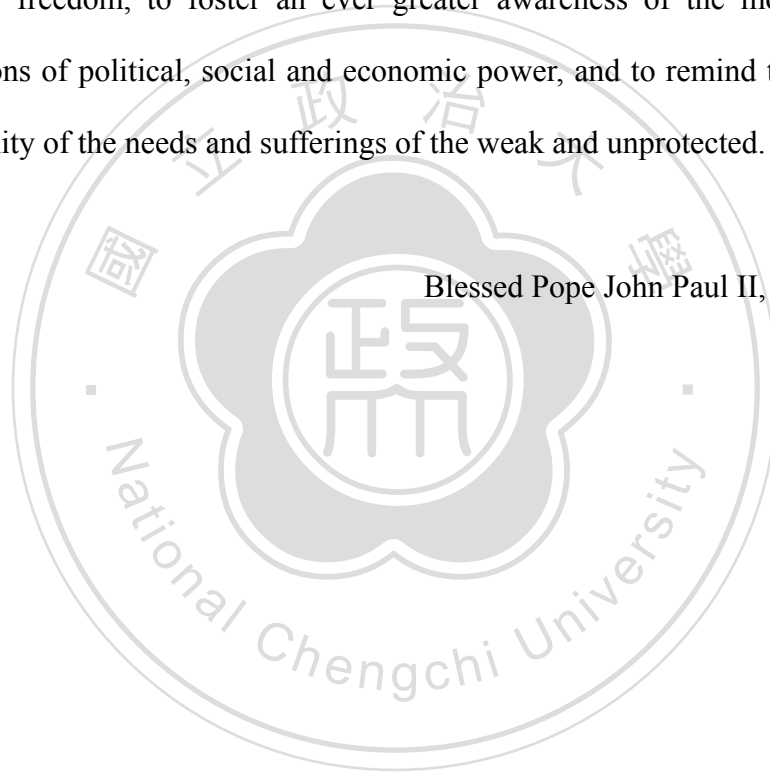
June 2012

*À mon père bien aimé,*



Through its presence in the international community the Holy See seeks to defend the very structure of human rights, including the fundamental right to religious freedom, to foster an ever greater awareness of the moral and ethical obligations of political, social and economic power, and to remind the international community of the needs and sufferings of the weak and unprotected.

Blessed Pope John Paul II, 25 March 1995.



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## Abstract

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of China (ROC) and the Holy See were established in 1942. However, after a devastating civil war, the Chinese Communists gained control of Mainland China in 1949 and established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing. As a consequence, the Nationalist government of the ROC was forced to move from Nanking to Taipei, Taiwan. The Papal representative continued to remain at his post but the Communist government expelled him in 1951. In the following year, the Holy See decided to relocate its Apostolic Nunciature to Taipei and maintain its ties with the ROC. The tensions in the Strait between the two Chinese governments have put the Sino-Vatican relations to several tests. Indeed, the Vatican desires to normalize its relations with the PRC but is also confronted with two major issues imposed by Beijing which requests the direction of the Catholic Church in China and the end of the Holy See's recognition of Taipei. It would strike a serious blow to Taipei if the Supreme government of the Catholic Church decides to break off diplomatic relations. It will also create a fragile position for Taiwan on the international diplomatic stage since the Holy See, at present, is the only European ally to officially recognize the ROC government. The relations of the Holy See with Taiwan are characterized by a mutually productive and cooperative partnership, especially in the promotion of human rights, culture, world peace and advocacy of religious freedom and alleviation of global poverty. This thesis aims to clarify the triangular situation between the Vatican, the ROC and the PRC and to show the challenges as well as the dilemmas the Holy See is confronted with in order to normalize its relations with China. First, this study explains the international status of the Holy See and its specific mission. Then, through a diachronic analysis, this thesis traces the evolution of Sino-Vatican relations to later on identify the



difficulties the Holy See has to face across the Taiwan Strait. Then, it will analyze the efforts of Pope Benedict XVI to initiate a rapprochement with China and all the issues that have to be solved before negotiating any diplomatic ties. Based on this analysis, this thesis will show that the PRC and the Holy See are still at a stalemate and that the Vatican won't move its Nunciature from Taipei in the foreseeable future.

**Key-words:** Republic of China, Holy See, People's Republic of China, Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations, Apostolic Nunciature, religious freedom, challenges, dilemmas, stalemate.



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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Purpose of the Research**

This year, 2012, is of great significant importance for the Republic of China (Taiwan) because it marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its diplomatic ties with the Holy See, the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first Apostolic Delegate in China, Cardinal Costantini, and the 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary of its founding. The aim of this thesis is to give a clear understanding of the bilateral relations of the Holy See with the Republic of China and the challenges of such ties, as well as to identify the perspectives on Sino-Vatican relations on both sides of the Strait. Through the history of these relations, this paper wants to show the peaceful coexistence but also the issues that can exist between Church and State with the case study of the Republic of China. Indeed, the ROC-Vatican ties have remained friendly and stable throughout the years mainly because of their common belief in the sublime ideal of respect for humanity, democracy, freedom, human rights, world peace and also the promotion of the greater welfare for each human being. The analysis of the 70<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of cordial ties between the ROC and the Holy See will show the expression of the closeness existing between Catholicism and Chinese culture. These diplomatic ties are definitely based on shared beliefs and goals, and not on ordinary worldly interests and advantages. Having understood the meaning of such ties, this research will not only emphasize the challenges the Holy See is facing with the PRC but also its mission and vocation to serve the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Indeed, the Holy See wants to return to China, where it was expelled in 1951, in order to reach not only Chinese Catholics but the whole nation. Many speculations have been done about a possible relocation of the Apostolic Nunciature from Taipei to Beijing. However, the Vatican has to face many challenges and dilemmas before this can happen. This thesis analyzes the triangular relationship of

Taiwan, the Vatican and China and concludes that the situation is very complex. Because of all the unsolved problems between the Holy See and the PRC, this study aims to show that the Holy See won't leave Taiwan in the foreseeable future.

## 1.2. Literature Review

Diplomacy is the art of creating, among peoples, humane and reasonable relations animated by a high ideal, and aiming at establishing the rule of law, justice and peace in the international community.<sup>1</sup> It is not dependent upon international law. On the contrary, it has evolved historically according to its own laws. In other words, diplomatic practice is a source of international law rather than one of its creations. Vatican diplomacy is the best example of the view that refers primarily to diplomacy as an institution. This is the system by which the Holy See carries on stable, formal, and reciprocal intercourse with other states and international organizations, through accredited public agents. It is the instrument by which the supreme authority of the Catholic Church communicates, within the framework of standard international practice, with the supreme authority of the states, in the transaction of current or special problems which arise on the part of either Church or State; for resolution, the common accord of the ultimate authority of both parties is required.<sup>2</sup> Vatican foreign policy differs from usual foreign policy. This can be explained by the fact that what the Vatican represents is not just the city-state, but also the universal Church. In the narrow sense, what the Vatican is most concerned with are its faithful spread in all corners of the world. In a more general sense, the Vatican represents the Universal Church and is concerned with the whole human

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<sup>1</sup> Chao, J. (2000). The evolution of Vatican diplomacy. *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs*, 4 (4), p. 45

<sup>2</sup>Chao, J. (1997). Juridical, Functional and Operational Factors Affecting Vatican Diplomacy. *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs*, 1(2), p. 20

race. (...) All the usual diplomatic concerns, such as national stature, political rights, and economic benefits, are not the things that the Vatican emphasizes. It is therefore proper to say that Vatican foreign policy is based on a desire to assist the human race in diffusing conflicts and fomenting peaceful coexistence.<sup>3</sup> The ecclesiastical diplomat brings words of understanding; he is the advocate of the just causes of the population; he collaborates with the government and with the nation in which he is a guest.<sup>4</sup> The ideal of ecclesiastical diplomacy is the brotherhood of men, and whether or not it succeeds in achieving this goal it serves as a guide for civil diplomacy which attempts to make reason prevail over force and to contribute to the growth of individual states in harmony with all others. (...) Thus, the envoys of the Holy See are sent to various countries, not just to defend the rights of the Church, but also to defend the right and to serve the needs of the people there.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, his mission includes the moral, cultural and social problems which belong to the major interests of mankind such as respect for human rights, promotion of international order and development of friendly ties among all nations through peaceful co-existence, through respect for justice and the promotion of human progress.<sup>6</sup>

The 1911 revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen overthrew the Qing dynasty and in 1912, the government of the Republic of China was established in Nanking, marking the birth of the first republic in Asia. In 1922, Pope Pius XI appointed Archbishop Celso Costantini as the first Apostolic Delegate in China, an ecclesiastical

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<sup>3</sup> Shan, P. (2002). Preface. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. I

<sup>4</sup> Cardinale, I. (1962). *Le Saint-Siège et la diplomatie. Aperçu historique, juridique et pratique de la diplomatie pontificale*. Paris, France: Desclée, p. 194

<sup>5</sup> Chao, J. (2000). The evolution of Vatican diplomacy, p. 49

<sup>6</sup> Cardinale, I. (1976). *The Holy See and the International Order*. Toronto: Gerrards Cross : Smythe, p. 38



representative of His Holiness the Pope with no formal diplomatic credentials.<sup>7</sup> Then, it was not until 1942 that diplomatic relations were established between the Holy See and the Republic of China. In 1949, following the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) victory in the Civil war, the government of the Republic of China departed from Mainland China. Moreover, since the founding of the People's Republic of China many foreign states gradually shifted diplomatic recognition to Beijing, insisting that Taiwan was part of China under the "One-China Policy". Relations between Taiwan and the Mainland have been since then turbulent and crisis-filled.<sup>8</sup> This culminated with the People's Republic of China displacing Taiwan at the United Nations, in 1971. The Vatican remains currently the only state in Europe that recognizes the ROC.

Diplomatic relations between the PRC and the Vatican were severed in 1951, when the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop A. Riberi was expelled from China. The Apostolic Nunciature moved to Taiwan where it remained ever since, although in recent years the Nuncio is represented only by a *chargé d'affaires, a.i.* The move to Taiwan was the only means the Holy See had of maintaining its relationship with China's Catholics.<sup>9</sup> From 1951, things have become difficult for the Vatican since it has had to face the challenges and dilemmas across the Taiwan Strait. In order to normalize its diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the two matters in need of resolution are the Vatican's relations with Taiwan and the

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<sup>7</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations: Problems and Prospects, p. 815

<sup>8</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*. Working Papers, Current Issues in Religion and Politics, University of St. Andrews, the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics (CSRP), Scotland, UK. Retrieved February 10, 2012, from <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/CIRPIII%2011120042.pdf>, p. 19

<sup>9</sup> Cioppa, J. (2006). Preface. In E. Wurth, & Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit study centre, p. xvii

appointment of bishops.<sup>10</sup> Beijing's main concern in engaging in *rapprochement* with the Vatican is to isolate Taiwan. Indeed, Taiwan is consistently at the top of China's foreign policy agenda, and the prospect of a Vatican concession on this issue would be a large incentive at least for further talk.<sup>11</sup> The severing of Taiwan-Vatican diplomatic relations would be a natural outcome of establishing Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations. By isolating Taiwan, Beijing hopes to force Taiwan to the negotiating table and move towards the reunification of Taiwan and China on Beijing's terms.<sup>12</sup> The Holy See desires to normalize Sino-Vatican relations in order to be able to serve the Church in China and be closer to the Chinese Catholics. In Hong Kong, *The Sunday Examiner* of April 16<sup>th</sup> 2005 quoted Bishop Joseph Zen Ze-kium: "The Holy See is thinking of giving up Taiwan. This is a difficult decision, but it has decided to do it. If the Holy See does not establish ties with China, Catholics there will not have real freedom".<sup>13</sup>

Hannah Smith, a professor of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics at St. Andrews University in Scotland, UK, wrote that for Beijing, distancing Taiwan from its only source of European recognition (the Vatican) would be a substantial benefit for fostering Sino-Vatican relations, strengthening the "One-China" policy and increasing domestic support. It is a zero-sum game. The Vatican would also see advantages, principally access and (limited) control of the number of Catholics in China. Smith explained that treating both, the PRC and Taiwan, as self-interested actors it seems clear that the Vatican is willing to sacrifice diplomatic ties with

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid. p. xx

<sup>11</sup>Leung, B. (1998, March). The Sino-Vatican Negotiations: Old Problems in a New Context. *The China Quarterly*, 153, p. 140

<sup>12</sup>Leung, B. (2005). Sino-Vatican Relations at the Century's Turn. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 14(43), p. 365

<sup>13</sup>Charbonnier, J., & Politi, G. (2006). China-Vatican relations: 1978-2005. In *The Catholic Church in China: today and tomorrow*. Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, p. 132

Taiwan in order to tap into the Chinese ‘market’ whilst Beijing sees a political opportunity to strengthen its position against Taiwan regionally and enhance its power in the international system.<sup>14</sup>

The Vatican is concerned with its faithful wherever they are in the world but also by the whole human race and aims to protect their rights, freedom and well-being. This is one of the principle reasons why the Holy See wants to establish ties with China. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican’s Secretary for the Relations with the States at that time, explained in an interview with the China Times of Taipei on June 3, 1999: “For the Holy See, the first aim of diplomatic relations, with China as with other countries, is that of fostering the life of the Church and of promoting peace in the international context through dialogue”.<sup>15</sup> Laura Luehrmann, a professor at Wright State University (Dayton, Ohio, USA), thinks that the Vatican does not only have a religious aim in negotiating with China but also a political one. For her, the Vatican’s goals surround the expansion of the freedom of worship in the PRC as well as the desire to increase the number of Catholic faithful. (...) Yet as some have warned, the Holy See will lose out if it is perceived to be sacrificing moral principles (by ending its ties with Taiwan) for the sake of political gain.<sup>16</sup> What are the implications for the Church of Taiwan that has been faithful and supported the papacy throughout these many years? Would the Holy See seem to ignore the fidelity of Catholics and Church leaders in Taiwan and appear to abandon them diplomatically?<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*, p. 20

<sup>15</sup> Tai, R. (2002). The Vatican's Dilemma: Taipei and/or Beijing?, p. 610

<sup>16</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). The Red Flag and the Ring: the dances surrounding the Vatican ties. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 1(3), p. 500.

<sup>17</sup>Maheu, B. A. (2005, November 7). The Catholic Church in China. *America Press News*, 193(14), p. 14

If China normalizes its relations with the Holy See, Beijing authorities could incur potentially significant risks to their hegemony by engaging in formal diplomatic ties. With a permanent Papal representative in Beijing who would be required under Canon Law 364 to send information to the Vatican about the status of the Chinese Church, authorities may struggle to find ways to check the flow of information.<sup>18</sup> It is unclear as to whether or not Beijing will be willing to sacrifice this element of sovereignty for other political gain. Similarly, the size (and potential authority) of a united Church in China could prove to be a challenging force to the CCP's authority. Not only would potential exist for clashes between the CCP and the Catholic Church but also for the Church to act as a mechanism through which voices of dissent could be aired - the destabilizing potential is evident.<sup>19</sup>

In 2005, Tou Chou-seng, former ambassador of ROC to the Holy See, once said to *Christian Today* that China uses Taiwan as pretext, while the real problem is that of religious freedom.<sup>20</sup> Raymond Tai, another former ROC ambassador to the Holy See, mentioned that article 36 of the Revised PRC Constitution of 1982 states that "Citizens of the PRC enjoy freedom of religious belief...No religious affairs may be dominated by any foreign country." Under such circumstances, the Holy See can hardly normalize its relations with Beijing. As Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, former President of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, said quite openly in a recent interview, "It is a long road from Bethlehem to Beijing, one strewn with advances

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<sup>18</sup> Luehrmann, L. Ibid. p. 501

<sup>19</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*, p. 24-25

<sup>20</sup>Eunice, K. Y. (2005, May 19). Taiwan Remains a Question as Vatican-China Relations Progress. *Christian Today*. Retrieved January 12, 2012, from <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/taiwan.remains.a.question.as.vatican.china.relations.progress./2922.htm>

and retreats”.<sup>21</sup> The Holy See would like to have good religious relations, as well as political relations, with both Taipei and Beijing if at all possible. (...) The Holy See prefers not to make gestures that could be interpreted as “hostile” by either of the two sides.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, His Holiness Pope John Paul II did not fail to express his appreciation for the various initiatives and steps which the two governments took for a better mutual understanding.<sup>23</sup>

Cardinal Shan<sup>24</sup> wrote that faced with growing relations between the PRC and the Church, the Taiwanese Catholic Church finds itself in an awkward situation. On this, Pope John Paul II had since 1984 been saying the same thing: He hoped that the Taiwan Church could serve the role of a BridgeChurch. That means, in its pejorative connotations, that through the example set by the Taiwan Catholic Church, the authorities on the other side of the Taiwan Straits could realize that a local Church with close ties and subordinate relationship with the Church in Rome could at the same time enjoy a sufficient level of self-determination. On a more positive connotation, it also means an appeal to the Taiwan Church to provide assistance to the Mainland Chinese Church in terms of manpower and spiritual support. This will be done to allow the development of a really self-determinate local Church and to help build normal relations with the Holy See. Cardinal Shan stated that just like common ROC citizens who wish to see peace and harmony between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, the Taiwanese Catholic Church also wishes to see improvement in PRC-Vatican relations, as well as real freedom in the Catholic Church on Mainland China. He hopes that such improvement can contribute to better relations between

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<sup>21</sup>Tai, R. (2002). *The Vatican's Dilemma: Taipei and/or Beijing?*, p. 610

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 611

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 612

<sup>24</sup> Paul Cardinal Shan Kuo-hsi, S.J.(單國璽) Bishop Emeritus of Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Taiwan and the PRC.<sup>25</sup> In January 2011, on Radio Vatican, Larry Wang, current ROC ambassador to the Holy See, said: “Yes, we fully understand the Holy Father’s concern for the situation, and for China’s Catholic communities on Mainland China. I can report to you that the Church in Taiwan has not forgotten to play the role of “BridgeChurch” as she has been asked to do by the Holy Father”.<sup>26</sup>

### 1.3. Theoretical Framework and Thesis Outline

In order to understand the bilateral ties that connect the Republic of China with the Vatican, it is first important to identify the shape of Vatican foreign policy. For that, this study must examine the nature and international status of the Holy See with its aims and characteristics. The Vatican’s diplomacy differs from secular diplomacy because of its goals and pursuits of religious freedom, peace and human dignity. Indeed, the Holy See, unlike other states, has a voice and influence in the international arena because of its specific and unique mission of establishing Bridges of peace between the nations and its interests of promoting moral principles. How does the Supreme government of the Catholic Church use its soft power in its diplomacy? Why does the Holy See want to establish ties with the states?

In this case study of the Holy See and the Republic of China, it is necessary to adopt a diachronic approach to clarify the establishment and history of Sino-Vatican relations. This approach will help to understand the goals and the meaning of these ties. Because of the creation of the People’s Republic of China, the government of

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<sup>25</sup> Shan, P. (2002). Preface. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. p. V

<sup>26</sup>Wang, L. (2011, January 15). Taiwan's Ambassador to Holy See on Pope's "state of the world" address. (R. Vatican, Interviewer) Rome, Italy. Retrieved from <http://www.fluctu8.com/podcast-episode/taiwans-ambassador-to-holy-see-on-Popes-state-of-the-world-address-15017-82462.html>

the Republic of China moved to Taiwan in 1949, followed by the Apostolic Nunciature in 1951. Since then, the Holy See has been facing challenges and dilemmas across the Taiwan Strait. It is therefore important not only to examine the triangular relationship of the Holy See, the ROC and the PRC, but also the situation of the Vatican with the cross-Strait conundrum. In addition, we will analyze the policy of the Holy See toward China and Taiwan to determine the difficulties and the dilemmas encountered. Finally, in order to find a possible solution to the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations, this thesis will use a heuristic approach and analyze two models of Church-state diplomatic interactions: the Russian and the Vietnam cases. In conclusion, considering all the aspects and difficulties of the triangular relationship of Taiwan, the Holy See and China, we will conclude to the *status quo* because of the complexity of the situation in the cross-Strait and the conflict of authority between the Vatican and the PRC.

#### **1.4. Methodology and Procedure**

This thesis aims to highlight the politico-historical context of the diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Republic of China until the present time in order to recognize a possible scenario in favor of the normalization process for Sino-Vatican relations. This study goes back in time and details milestones in the history of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Republic of China in order to explain their ties as well as the issues of Sino-Vatican relations. A historical-empirical approach is used for this thesis in order to benefit from the rigor of the historical method and the ductility of empirical research in the analysis of sources. Moreover, in the last chapter, we use the case study method and look at two models: Russia and Vietnam and their relations with the Apostolic See. These models are heuristic devices that can help to enlighten our reflection on the

Sino-Vatican issue.

This study is clearly trans-disciplinary and adopts a holistic approach to Sino-Pontifical relations. It takes not only takes into consideration religion, theology, international geo-politics, geo-strategy and diplomacy, but also focuses on a social and specific context where these relations are implemented. On such a study as our thesis, we understand that there is a limitation to the interpretation of data, that there is a hermeneutical aim rather than a cognitive one, and that there is a diversity of opinion rather than a normative one. For this thesis, we have principally used two types of sources, primary and secondary. Primary sources are multiple with a diversity of subjects in the study. These primary sources are experts' interviews, discourses and political actions, official documents, agreements, credential letters. Many essays or journalistic articles were written about Sino-Vatican relations and the difficulties of the Apostolic See in establishing ties with China. While, there is a large literature about China and the Catholic Church, there is a paucity of studies in the specific topic of the relations between Taiwan and the Vatican. Most of the periodical articles or books in English focus on China-Vatican relations; the question of Taiwan-Vatican relations has not been the center of these studies but only one part or one chapter. The public lecture of Ambassador Raymond Tai *The Vatican's Dilemmas: Taipei and/or Beijing?*, given in 2002 at the International Institute of Asia Studies and the Sinological Institute of Leiden University (Netherlands), has not only helped me considerably to understand the history and the nature of ROC-Vatican bilateral relations, but also the dilemmas of the Catholic Church with China and Taiwan.

In order to have a clear comprehension of Vatican's diplomacy with the



Republic of China that started 70 years ago, I first benefited from the advice given by my thesis director, Professor Tou Chou-seng, who was ambassador of the ROC to the Holy See. He helped me to identify not only the meaning of the relations between the two states, but also the challenges of these ties since 1949 when the ROC government shifted to Taiwan and the PRC was proclaimed. Professor Tou challenged me with many questions that were problematic to my research field; I came to understand that it was first essential to define the status and mission of the Holy See. For this aim, I read *The Holy See and the International Order* (Cardinale, 1976), and *The Holy See in Multilateral Diplomacy* (Dupuy, 2003) and Chao's papers (1997, 2000). Other books in French gave me the key and tools to have a clear understanding of the Holy See and the purpose of its diplomacy: *Le Saint-Siège et la diplomatie, Aperçu historique, juridique et pratique de la diplomatie pontificale* (Cardinale, 1962), *Urbi et Orbi. Enquête sur la géopolitique vaticane* (Colonna-Cesari, 1992) or *Le Saint-Siège, sujet souverain de droit international* (Barberini, 2003). Dr. Tou introduced me Fabrizio Bozzato who is currently a Ph.D. student at the Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies at Tamkang University and also an associate researcher at the Ricci Institute in Taipei. Outstanding political analyst with a double expertise in Pacific Studies and China-Holy See relations, he has been very kind and of so much help to me from the very beginning of my research. He explained me so well to me the methodology to adopt for this kind of research and spent so many hours to share with me his incredible knowledge about the Holy See's *Sinopolitik*.

The book , *Christians in China* (2002), of Reverend Jean Charbonnier, my confrere that I met in Paris to interview, and those of Louis Wei Tsing-Sing, *Le Saint Siège, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Léon XIII* (1966, the Holy See,

France and China under the pontificate of Leo XIII) and *le Saint-Siège et la Chine de Pie XI à nos jours* (1968, the Holy See and China from Pius XI to our present time) have opened for me the doors to enter into the heart of the history of ROC-Vatican diplomacy.

I went to Rome, Italy and had the privilege to meet ROC Ambassador to the Holy See, H. E. Larry Wang who explained to me the essence of the diplomatic ties of his country with the See of Peter in promoting human dignity, global poverty alleviation, world peace, democracy, religious freedom... He gave me a lot of documents such as his credential letters, his speech upon presenting to the Holy Father his letters of credence and the Pope's address on that occasion. In the Eternal city, I met experts like Dr. Peter Chiang, a journalist based at Radio Vatican who spent long hours with me answering my multitude of questions. I also got the opportunity to discuss with clergymen like Reverend Angelo Lazzaroto, Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions (PIME) and Reverend Wilhelm Müller, Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D.), who gave me a good bibliography that has helped me to take the right directions in this study of the relations between the Supreme government of the Catholic Church and Taipei. It was important for me to meet them to have more information and explanations about my specific research in the field of Taiwanese studies

In 2002, Professor Chen Fang-Chung of Fu Jen University, Taipei, published *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. This book is a treasure for my research because it not only provides me the official letters, addresses and speeches exchanged between the Apostolic See and the Republic of China but also the pontifical documents towards China. This book

provides precious reference materials for scholars and students who want to perform research in that field. Likewise, the compilation of Papal documents of Elmer Wurth, related to China (1937-2005), offers a lot of material. This latter book has definitely helped me to understand the Sino-Vatican relations and the situation of Taiwan. I found in this book one important text of John Paul II: *To the Taiwan Bishops and the Chinese Diaspora: "Be a Bridge-Church"*, that shows how much the Pope desires Taiwan to play a role in the process of rapprochement of the Church with China. In these pontifical documents, we can feel and understand the spirit and aims of the Holy See's diplomacy.

Beijing has laid down two preconditions to the Vatican in order to normalize diplomatic relations: the nomination of bishops, namely, the non-interference in China's internal affairs and the end of its relations with Taiwan. These Vatican-Taiwan relations have not been so much explored and developed. We found papers, journalistic articles, books and on the data-base of NCCU i-library and other documents on the Internet that are about China-Vatican relations. Then, we collected everything where the Taiwan factor was mentioned in order to lead our study. The publications of Beatrice Leung (1998, 2005), Gerald Chan (1989) and Luehrmann (2009) are of great interest but become obsolete as time flows. We keep ourselves updated on this topic thanks to all the online articles on the websites of the Holy Spirit center in Hong-Kong ([http://www.hsstudyc.org.hk/en/en\\_main.html](http://www.hsstudyc.org.hk/en/en_main.html)), the blog of the Vaticanist, Andrea Tornielli (<http://2.andreatornielli.it/>), 30 days which is international monthly magazine directed by Giulio Andreotti ([http://www.30giorni.it/index\\_13.htm](http://www.30giorni.it/index_13.htm)), Asianews.it (<http://www.asianews.it/en.html>) or Chiesa, the website of the Vaticanist, Sandro Magister (<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/?eng=y>). We also lead the same procedure of

research online for the study of the Russia-Vatican and Vietnam-Vatican relations of the chapter 7 of this thesis.



## 2. The International Status of the Holy See

### 2.1. Introduction

The Roman Catholic Church is the only religious institution in the world to have diplomatic relations with other states and that is concerned with international law. The Catholic Church is ruled by a supreme organ that is defined as *Holy See*.<sup>27</sup> These are two distinct entities that should not be confused with each other. In fact, The Holy See is to the Church what the government is to the State, with the difference being that the monarchical constitution of the Church, being of divine origin, is not subject to change.<sup>28</sup> Actually, the term *Holy See* has three different meanings. Sometimes, it denotes the Pope together with the central offices of the Roman Curia, formed of the sacred congregations, the tribunals and the various other departments. Sometimes it designates the Pope in his role as visible head of the Church, possessing the Apostolic primacy as successor of St. Peter. Finally, it sometimes indicates the spiritual organization of Papal government.<sup>29</sup>

In 1929, the Lateran Treaty defined the sovereignty and the independence of the Holy See and gave it a territory that is the Vatican City State. The Holy See has quite an atypical status in the international realm. In fact, the international and juridical status of the Holy See because of its quite unique situation has been the subject of many controversies and discussions in the international community. Thus, this chapter aims to clarify the international status of the Holy See, its connection with the Catholic Church, the nature of the Vatican City State and the mission of the

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<sup>27</sup>The word “See” comes from the Latin *sedes* which means seat. This seat refers to the seat or the residence of the Bishop. “Holy See” refers to the preeminent seat of the Bishop of Rome who is the Pope. The term “See” refers to the “Chair of Peter”: that is, to the symbol of the teaching and governing authority of the first of the Apostles, Simon Peter, whose successor the Pope is: hence it is qualified as Apostolic or Holy.

<sup>28</sup>Cardinale, I. (1976). *The Holy See and the International Order*. Toronto: Gerrards Cross : Smythe, p. 85

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. p. 82

pontifical diplomacy. It is important to point out its legitimacy to act in the international arena but also to explain the special characteristics of the pontifical diplomacy to better understand its ties with the Republic of China.

## **2.2. The Legal Status of the Holy See in Public International Law**

### *2.2.1. The Papal States and the Roman Question*

Relations between the Church and the various States have existed from time immemorial.<sup>30</sup> Throughout the existence of the Papal States, the Pope was a monarch and, as such, the equal of all other monarchs. His influence and privileges granted to him by the different European states were due not solely to his status of monarch of a state, but also to his position as the Head of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>31</sup> On September 20, 1870, Italian troops occupied Rome and invaded the Papal States.<sup>32</sup> Then, Rome, capital of the Supreme government of the Catholic Church, became the Italian Capital of King Victor-Emmanuel II. The Pope, Pius IX, was no longer considered as a territorial sovereign and this storming of Rome became known as the “Roman Question”. Even though the Pope had no more territories, the Holy See retained its international personality. It continued to have relations with many states, to exercise the *ius legationis* (that is the right of active and passive legation<sup>33</sup>), to apply the *ius foedorum ac tractatum* and *ius contrahendi* (that is to negotiate and conclude concordats, treaties and agreements with other states).

The Supreme Pontiff has always been recognized as a sovereign and a subject

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<sup>30</sup>Cardinale, I. (1976). *The Holy See and the International Order*, p. 76

<sup>31</sup>Chao, J. (1997). Juridical, Functional and Operational Factors Affecting Vatican Diplomacy. *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs*, 1(2), p. 20

<sup>32</sup> See map

<sup>33</sup> The right of active legation is the right of a state to send envoys to other states or international organizations. The right of passive legation is the right of a state to receive envoys from other states. The right of legation is a consequence of sovereignty.

of international law despite the absence of a temporal sovereignty as during the Italian conquest. Indeed, the Holy See has a spiritual sovereignty that is independent to any territory. This spiritual aspect is one of the two sides of its sovereignty. According to the Code of Canon Law:

Can. 361: The terms Holy See mean not only the Roman Pontiff, but also, unless the contrary is clear from the nature of things or from the context, the Secretariat of State, the Council for the public affairs of the Church, and the other Institutes of the Roman Curia. They constitute the central administration and therefore the government of the Catholic Church.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, the place of the Holy See and its presence on the international scene is explained by its supreme authority over the Catholic Church. The spiritual sovereignty is the sovereignty by excellence attributed to the Pope, head of the Church. The international personality of the Holy See comes from it.<sup>35</sup>

### 2.2.2. *The Holy See and its International Personality*

In 1929, a settlement to this so-called “Roman Question” was achieved with the Treaty of Lateran.<sup>36</sup> With this treaty<sup>37</sup>, the Holy See gained its international recognition and was approved as a person of international law. In fact, the Treaty was founded upon the presumption that the Holy See possessed international personality. In the Article 2, this treaty states that:

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<sup>34</sup>Catholic Church.(1983). *Code of Canon Law, Latin - English*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Can. 361

<sup>35</sup>Barberini, G. (2003). *Le Saint-Siège, sujet de droit international*. Paris, France: Cerf, p. 38

<sup>36</sup> The treaty of Lateran is also known as “The Lateran Pacts” according to the literal translation of Italian *Patti lateranensi*

<sup>37</sup>The Lateran Pacts of 1929 contained three sections—the Treaty of Conciliation (27 articles) which established Vatican City as an independent state, restoring the civil sovereignty of the Pope as a monarch, the Financial Convention annexed to the treaty (3 articles) which compensated the Holy See for loss of the Papal states, and the Concordat (45 articles), which dealt with the Roman Catholic Church's ecclesiastical relations with the Italian State.

Italy recognizes the sovereignty of the Holy See in international matters as an inherent attribute in conformity with its traditions and the requirements of its mission to the world.<sup>38</sup>

The Italian government therefore recognizes the Supreme Institution of the Church as an autonomous and independent entity that has an individual legal subjectivity at the international level. The Lateran Treaty is an international act which also concerns third states.<sup>39</sup> This sovereignty allows the Holy See to participate in international relations and gives it the right to be considered as a subject of international law. The Holy See is therefore legitimate to intervene on the world stage. Nevertheless, the Pope might continue to act even without any territory, given that international law tends to extend the notion of international personality to governmental international organizations that do not necessarily have the state status.

The fact that the Holy See is a non-territorial institution is no longer regarded as a reason for denying its international personality. The papacy can act in its own name in the international community. It can enter into legally binding conventions known as concordats. Indeed, in the world of diplomacy the Pope enjoys the rights of active and passive legation. He can send and receive representatives who are public ministers in the sense of international law.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, this personality of the Holy See is distinct from the personality of the State of Vatican City which is a

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<sup>38</sup>Article 2 of the Lateran Pacts of 1929: Treaty between the Holy See and Italy in the Name of the Most Holy Trinity. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from <http://www.vaticanstate.va/NR/rdonlyres/3F574885-EAD5-47E9-A547-C3717005E861/2528/LateranTreaty.pdf>

<sup>39</sup>Barberini, G. (2003). *Le Saint-Siège, sujet de droit international*. Paris, France: Cerf, p. 37 (*Le traité du Latran est un acte international qui concerne également les Etats tiers*)

<sup>40</sup>Graham, R. (1959). *Vatican diplomacy : a study of Church and state on the international plane*. Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, p. 201



territorial entity. The papacy as a religious organ is a subject of international law and capable of international rights and duties.<sup>41</sup> The Sovereignty of the Pope is recognized internationally and provides legitimacy to the Holy See to intervene on the world stage. To reinforce this idea of the Sovereignty of the Pope independent to the territory, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, a former Under-Secretary for Relations with States<sup>42</sup> of the Vatican said that “the Holy See is not a state, but a sovereign moral force, the expression of the Papacy on the international scene”.<sup>43</sup>

### **2.3. The Holy See and the Founding of the Vatican City State**

#### *2.3.1. The Vatican City State: a Vassal State*

The creation of the Vatican City State (*Stato della Città del Vaticano in Italian*), in 1929 by the Treaty of Lateran, provides the Holy See with a temporal jurisdiction and independence within a small territory. Thus, the Pope was reestablished as the sovereign of the State of the Vatican City. With a tiny surface of 44 hectares, the very nature of the Vatican City State has been often discussed and contested by internationalist doctrine. Indeed, the Vatican City State does not fulfill perfectly the criteria of the Montevideo Convention<sup>44</sup> definition of law of statehood that requires a state to have a permanent population, a defined territory, a stable government and the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

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<sup>41</sup>Graham, R. (1959). *Vatican diplomacy : a study of Church and state on the international plane*, p. 186

<sup>42</sup> An office equivalent to that of Foreign Minister

<sup>43</sup> Tauran, Jean Louis as quoted in Hercules, N.J , Holy See Diplomacy: a study of non-alignment in the post-World War Two era, Catholic Culture, January 5, 1999, Retrieved December 14, 2011, from <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=798>

<sup>44</sup>The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States was a treaty signed at Montevideo, Uruguay, on December 26, 1933, during the Seventh International Conference of American States. The Convention codified the declarative theory of statehood as accepted as part of customary international law.

The Vatican City is regarded as a “vassal” state<sup>45</sup> of the Holy See. Unlike any other modern nation, the Vatican City does not exist to support its citizens. Rather, its purpose is to provide a base for the central administration of the Roman Catholic Church. Article 4 of the Lateran Treaty states:

The sovereignty and exclusive jurisdiction over the Vatican City, which Italy recognizes as appertaining to the Holy See, forbids any intervention therein on the part of the Italian Government, or that any authority other than that of the Holy See shall be there acknowledged.<sup>46</sup>

The Vatican State is a very specific state because it was founded to give a territory to a universal and spiritual government and therefore to ensure its total independence vis-à-vis other established powers. In fact, the Vatican City State is an instrument and its *raison d'être* is the service of the Church and of the papacy for their mission to manifest the independence of the Holy See toward any other authority or power. After the fall of the Papal States, Pius IX told to the French ambassador:

All that I want is a small corner of earth where I am master. This is not to say that I would refuse my states if there they were offered to me, but so long as I do not have this little corner of earth, I shall not be able to exercise my spiritual functions in their fullness.<sup>47</sup>

### 2.3.2. *Sovereignty and Independence of the Holy See*

The Vatican and the Holy See are distinct entities, both recognized internationally as such, and subjects of international law; but they are indissolubly

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<sup>45</sup>Kunz, J. L. (1952, April). The status of the Holy See in international law. *American society of international law*, 46(2), pp. 308-312.

<sup>46</sup> The Lateran Pacts of 1929, Article 4

<sup>47</sup>Nichols, P. (1980). Daily Life in the Vatican. In *The Vatican*. New York, USA: Vendome Press, p. 107

united in the person of the Pope who is at once ruler of the State and head of the Roman Catholic Church. Although the former is temporal in its purpose and the latter is spiritual, this intimate union prevents the Vatican from being restricted to purely political purposes. The Holy See exercises sovereignty over the Vatican City, not for the advantage of the State itself, but for the higher interest of the Church. This State was created with temporal sovereignty primarily to assure independence of spiritual action to the Holy See. The Vatican is thus a means to a higher end, an instrument of another pre-existing juridical subject, from which it cannot be separated. The close union with the Holy See imports to this minuscule State its great importance, it also makes it juridically and politically unique in the world.<sup>48</sup>

The State of the Vatican City can thus be deemed a significant but not essential instrument of the Holy See. As previously mentioned, the Holy See has remained continuously as a juridical entity since Roman Imperial times and has been internationally recognized as a powerful and independent sovereign entity since late antiquity to the present, without interruption even at times when it was deprived of territory. Between 1870 and 1929, which lay between the loss of the traditional Church States and the establishment of the State of the Vatican City, the Holy See by the practice of States, remained a subject of international law. Indeed, the Holy See never ended to conclude concordats and international treaties with a great number of States, to participate in international conferences, to conduct mediation and arbitration missions, and maintain both active and passive diplomatic relations. The aim of the creation of the Vatican City State is to ensure the absolute and visible independence of the Holy See, to guarantee its indisputable sovereignty in

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<sup>48</sup> Chao, J. (1997). Juridical, Functional and Operational Factors Affecting Vatican Diplomacy. *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs*, 1(2), p. 31

international matters. It has been found necessary to create, under special conditions, the Vatican City, recognizing the full ownership, exclusive and absolute dominion and sovereign jurisdiction of the Holy See over that City.<sup>49</sup> Thus, with the creation of the Vatican City State, the Pope was able to freely govern the Catholic Church and conduct diplomatic relations. Among other things the Preamble of the Lateran Treaty states that the contracting parties had recognized the convenience of guaranteeing to the Holy See, in a stable way, a “*de facto*” and “*de jure*” condition, in order that it may obtain an absolute independence for the accomplishment of its divine mission, and the necessity to guarantee to the Holy See a complete and visible independence and a sovereignty unassailable in international law.<sup>50</sup> In his speech of December 28, 1949 to the Diplomatic Corps, accredited to the Holy See, Pius XII thus defined the character and purpose of the Vatican City State:

Is it not very significant - the confidence shown by so many Heads of State who have sent you as their Ambassadors...to the Holy Apostolic See...this Vatican City State whose importance cannot be illustrated by statistics, nor measured by its territorial extent nor evaluated by the strength of its armed forces? What is its territory, upon which you have met together, if not an imperceptible point on the globe and on the maps of the world? Nevertheless, in the spiritual order it is a symbol of great value and of universal extension, for it is the guarantee of the absolute independence of the Holy See in the accomplishment of its worldwide mission.<sup>51</sup>

### 2.3.3. *The Holy See: a Sui Generis Entity*

The founding of the Vatican City State definitely made visible the independence of the Holy See toward the Italian State and to allow the Pope to not

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<sup>49</sup> The Lateran Pacts of 1929, Preamble

<sup>50</sup> Cumbo, H. F. (1948-1949, Winter). The Holy See and international law. *The International Law Quarterly*, 2(4), p. 607

<sup>51</sup> Allocution of December 28, 1949, *Discorsi e Radiomessagi de Sua Sanita Pio XII*, vol. XI, p. 347

only be a temporal sovereign but also the Head of the Catholic Church. This small state is not an end in itself but a means. The Vatican City is the physical base of the Holy See, almost a pedestal upon which is posed a much larger and unique independent and sovereign authority: that of the Holy See. The State of the Vatican City has an international juridical state personality and can establish international agreements. It has the capacity to act as a state especially in the international arena. The legal position held by the Vatican City in the international community is indisputable. However, it is the Holy See which internationally represents Vatican City State. In fact, when the Holy See enters into agreements for Vatican City State, it uses the formula: “acting on behalf and in the interest of the State of Vatican City”.<sup>52</sup> No diplomatic mission is accredited to the Pope solely in his capacity as a temporal sovereign of the Vatican City but with the Holy See.

The Holy See has a unique situation in international law because of its double sovereignty, both temporal and spiritual. Moreover this peculiar character, as a non-territorial entity with a legal personality akin to that of states is considered as an “anomaly”, an “atypical organism” or an entity “*sui generis*”<sup>53</sup>. The Status of the Holy See status may be unique however its statehoodlike status cannot be denied. The sovereignty and independence of the Holy See is recognized internationally. Currently, the Holy See has diplomatic relations with 179 sovereign states and in addition with the sovereign entity, the Order of Malta and the European Union. This definitely makes clear the international status of the Holy See. Thanks to its spiritual nature, the Holy See enjoys international personality which is reinforced by the

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<sup>52</sup>Yet, at the same time, the Vatican City is a party to some international and bilateral agreements. The denomination Vatican City State is used in texts concerning the International Telecommunications Union and the Universal Postal Union.

<sup>53</sup>*Sui generis* is a Latin expression, literally meaning of its own kind or unique in its characteristics.

founding of this small piece of territory. Thus, it has a legitimacy to be present on the international stage. Through the Holy See, the Catholic Church is the only religious denomination in the world to have access to international relations and to be concerned with international law.

## **2.4. The Mission and Interests of the Holy See**

### *2.4.1. A Diplomacy at the Service of Peace*

The interests of the Holy See are very different to those of other states. It doesn't seek for commercial relations or economic and financial trades. It doesn't have military forces nor border disputes. The Holy See is the only Organization which can authoritatively entrust its diplomatic agents with a mission which, being at once religious, political and social is entirely dedicated to peacemaking at the principal levels of human activity.<sup>54</sup> The mission of the Holy See is the pursuit of universal peace, based on justice and charity as the prerequisites of international harmony, order and cooperation. The peace message is the heart of the Gospel message. The Church finds the roots of its peacemaking in the teachings of the Gospel: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God".<sup>55</sup> Peace is not just a general condition of non-belligerence, of cohabitation and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; it is a great political edifice which, as Popes have emphasized in innumerable statements, rests on the pillars of truth, justice, freedom and solidarity. Peace is a great but fragile edifice, and it requires constant care and attention. In each of the Pope's annual messages for the World Day of Peace on 1 January, vital aspects for the protection of peace are indicated; simply by perusing the list of topics chosen as titles for the individual

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<sup>54</sup>Cardinale, I. (1976). *The Holy See and the International Order*, p. 39

<sup>55</sup>Gospel according to Saint Matthew, Mt 5, 9

World Peace Day messages from 1968 until today, one can grasp more specifically the areas in which the Holy See's diplomatic activity is conducted.<sup>56</sup> Peace is clearly a *leitmotiv* for the pontifical diplomacy. It has the ideal to solve the problems among nations in a peaceful manner and thus by refusing war as a solution. The pontifical diplomacy has been many times efficient in negotiation in international conflicts. The Holy See mediated conflicts among rival temporal powers. Thanks to its subtle influence, the Holy See succeeded in avoiding world crisis, war or at least delay it in some instances. In other times, the involvement in international mediation and arbitration of the Holy See resolved disputes among world powers before the disputes became hostile.

#### 2.4.2. *A Diplomacy at the Service of Religious Freedom*

As a representative of the Catholic Church, the Holy See acts first in the interests of the universal Church that is represented in the particular and local Churches in different parts of the world. It is concerned about its Catholics all around the world and their religious freedom. Pope, Pius XII, declared to the journalists of the Foreign Press Association in Rome, May 12, 1953:

The Holy See is the supreme authority of the Catholic Church and hence of a religious society whose goals are to be found in the supernatural and in the world beyond. Nevertheless, the Church lives in this world. Each of her sons and daughters, 400 million Catholics<sup>57</sup>, belongs to a particular State and people. It is always one of the essential tasks of the Holy See to see that, throughout the entire world, normal and if possible, friendly relations may reign between Church and State; this so that Catholics may live their faith in

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<sup>56</sup>Card. Lajolo, G. (May, 10, 2007). Lecture at Sophia University, Tokyo. Retrieved December 17, 2011 from [http://www.vaticanstate.va/EN/State\\_and\\_Government/Structure\\_Governorate/Presidency/Emeritus\\_President/2007/10\\_May\\_2007.htm](http://www.vaticanstate.va/EN/State_and_Government/Structure_Governorate/Presidency/Emeritus_President/2007/10_May_2007.htm)

<sup>57</sup>According to the Census of the 2012 *Annuario Pontificio*, Libreria editrice Vaticana (Pontifical Yearbook), the number of Roman Catholics of the world is about 1.196 billion at the end of 2010.

tranquility and peace and that the Church may at the same time, provide for the State that solid support which it constitutes wherever it is allowed to carry on its work.

Consequently political events have their repercussions also on the Church and on the Holy See, but only indirectly in the measure in which, ?other? in a sudden and radical way, they alter the situation of the Church in a country. Yet the Church does not wish to be and is not a political power using political means for political ends. It is a religious and moral power, whose competence extends as far as the bounds of the religious and moral sphere, and this in turn includes the activity of free responsible man, both as an individual and as a member of society”.<sup>58</sup>

The aim of the Holy See’s diplomacy is not only the *Libertas Ecclesiae* (the freedom of the Church) but also the benefit of the whole human race. The Holy See represents the Catholic Church in the very meaning of the etymology of the term Catholic<sup>59</sup>, which means “universal” in Greek. It doesn’t seek for its own interests but is also concerned for the promotion of human dignity, justice, freedom, common good, true good of man, love and truth for every human being. The Holy See is the bearer of a message of peace for all of humanity and seeks for the freedom of every believer. By its diplomacy, the Catholic Church wants to increase the protection of the rights of every human being. For the Holy See, these rights are grounded and shaped by the transcendent nature of the person, which permit men and women to pursue their journey of faith and their search for God in this world.

#### 2.4.3. *A Diplomacy at the Service of Humankind*

The Supreme government of the Church does not seek any personal advantage in its relationship with an individual State, but rather the spiritual good of the people

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<sup>58</sup> Allocution of May 12, 1953, *Discorsi e Radiomessagi di Sua Santità Pio XII*, Tipographia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1955, Vol. VX, pp. 141-142

<sup>59</sup> From the Greek adjective καθολικός (*katholikos*) which means “universal”



themselves whose temporal welfare is principally the concern of political leaders. The mission of the Holy See is to promote the true welfare of the peoples and nations, to contribute in the moral elevation of humankind and to the reign of peace in the world. In 1963, Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical letter,<sup>60</sup> *Pacem in terris*, defends the order that should prevail among men and the fundamental human rights:

Any well-regulated and productive association of men in society demands the acceptance of one fundamental principle: that each individual man is truly a person. He is a nature, that is, nature that is endowed with intelligence and free will. As such he has rights and duties, which together flow as a direct consequence from his nature. These rights and duties are universal and inviolable, and therefore altogether inalienable”.<sup>61</sup>

The Holy See has a very different form of relationship with secular states than they have with each other; it does not recognize the validity of war as an instrument of national policy; and it defines its secular enemies and allies on the basis of power in the spiritual domain. Although ecclesiastical diplomacy was able to shape and influence secular diplomacy in the Middle Ages, in the modern age this has been much less the case, since ecclesiastical and secular diplomacy are now much more deliberately compartmentalized.<sup>62</sup> Cardinal Casaroli underlined the important spiritual and moral mission of the Church in 1989 in a Disarmament Conference:

He who has the honor of addressing you today, and who is most grateful that

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<sup>60</sup> A Papal encyclical is a letter, usually treating some aspect of Catholic doctrine, sent by the Pope and addressed either to the Catholic bishops of a particular area or, more normally, to the bishops of the world; however, the form of the address can vary widely, and often designates a wider audience. Papal encyclicals usually take the form of a Papal brief due to their more personal nature as opposed to the formal Papal bull. Papal encyclicals are so famous that the term encyclical is used almost exclusively for those sent out by the Pope.

<sup>61</sup> Pope John XXIII. (1963). Encyclical letter, *Pacem in Terris*, §9

<sup>62</sup> Kent, P., & Pollard, J. (1994). A diplomacy unlike any other: Papal diplomacy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In P. Kent, J. Pollard, P. Kent, & J. Pollard (Eds.), *Papal diplomacy in the modern age* Westport, CT, USA: Praeger Publishers, p. 11

the opportunity of doing so has been offered to him represents before you a power (if it is even possible to use such a term) which has no army at all. Its arms are exclusively of moral and spiritual nature, far removed therefore from those with which your Conference is concerned”.<sup>63</sup>

The Holy See represents a moral power active in every part of the world that aims to offer a global project to the world on the spiritual and moral levels. Through *soft power*<sup>64</sup>, as described by Joseph S. Nye, the Holy See desires to conduct its spiritual mission and to lead society to higher values of freedom, of human rights and of peace which is a supreme good for humanity. Its actions take place on the plane of consciences by persuasion. The Holy See proceeds through different channels such as public opinion channels, diplomatic channels, or by the presence of its representatives at the assemblies held by the International Organizations. Technically, the diplomacy of the Vatican is carried out through bilateral diplomacy<sup>65</sup> and through multilateral diplomacy.<sup>66</sup>

## 2.5. Conclusion

The Holy See is the authority of the Pope within the Catholic Church; it is the institutional embodiment of the ministry of the Pontiff. Indeed, it has an atypical status and is a unique entity amongst other subjects of international law but its international personality cannot be denied. The status of the Holy See may be an

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<sup>63</sup>Card. Casaroli A., Statement at the Disarmament Conference (February, 21, 1989) in Dupuy, A. (2003). *Words that matter. The Holy See in multilateral diplomacy*. New York, USA: The Path to Peace foundation, p. 268

<sup>64</sup>Soft power is a concept developed by Joseph Nye to describe the ability to attract and co-opt rather than coerce and rather than using force or money as a means of persuasion. The phrase was coined by Joseph Nye of Harvard University in a 1990 book, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*.

<sup>65</sup> The bilateral diplomacy of the Holy See is the relations with the 179 states; the signing of Concordats, treaties that are in solemn form or accords on specific subjects.

<sup>66</sup> The multilateral diplomacy of the Holy See is the relations with governmental organizations, essentially the United Nations and its agencies, the Council of Europe, the European Communities, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], the Organization of American States and the Organization for African Unity.

anomaly; it enjoys international juridical status. Unlike the other states, the presence of the Holy See is universal. The pontifical diplomacy takes part in the realm of international relations as a moral voice or moral authority. Without any doubt, the Holy See has been and remains a vibrant part of the international arena and its voice speaks not just for some or for its own people but for all of humankind.

Even though the pontifical diplomacy has been many times efficient throughout its history, it also has some limits. The Pontiff only uses *soft power* for its diplomacy and words can be persuasive sometimes but also weak at other times. No one can assure the Pope that his words will be followed. In fact, a state will generally listen to the Holy See when the pontifical diplomacy is in its favor. A state in order to defend its own interests, especially on economic or political issues, won't necessarily listen to the message of the Pope and surpass its moral authority. The ideal of ecclesiastical diplomacy is the brotherhood of men, and whether or not it succeeds in achieving this goal it serves as a guide for civil diplomacy which attempts to make reason prevail over force and to contribute to the growth of individual states in harmony with all others. In fact, according to this view, it would be a positive loss for civil diplomacy if Vatican diplomacy ceased to be practiced. Thus, the envoys of the Holy See are sent to various countries, not just to defend the rights of the Church, but also to defend the rights and to serve the needs of the people there.<sup>67</sup> The Holy See has diplomatic relations with 179 countries and among them the Republic of China is included. The relations of the Holy See with the Republic of China are marked by mutual respect and by the shared ideals of religious freedom, human dignity, democracy world peace and the promotion of the

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<sup>67</sup>Chao, J. (2000). The evolution of Vatican diplomacy. *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs*, 4 (4), p. 49

greater welfare for each human being. However, these ties have been put to several tests. In fact, these relations have been an issue for the People's Republic of China to accept and to start diplomatic ties with the Vatican. That very issue needs to be investigated through the history of the Sino-Vatican relations in order to better understand the challenges that the Holy See must face between the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China.



### 3. Historical Evolution of Sino-Vatican Relations

#### 3.1. Introduction

In China, France and Britain took part in the Second Opium War<sup>68</sup> and in 1860 French troops entered Peking. Thus, China was forced into unequal treaties and to give France and Britain enormous indemnities. The treaties granted France the right to protect the missionary work in China. Therefore, China had to concede to France the so-called “French protectorate” over the Christian missions. However, the Holy See desired to free the missions from the protection of the colonial powers and to establish diplomatic ties between Rome and Peking. In 1860, Pope Pius IX sent Msgr. Louis Spelta as Apostolic visitor<sup>69</sup> to China in order to begin relations with the Emperor Xianfeng.<sup>70</sup> The Pontiff also gave to Msgr. Spelta a letter for the Chinese Emperor Xianfeng to establish a kind of convention with the Chinese Government, which could protect all the Catholics in China.<sup>71</sup> The letter stated:

The Holy See frankly wants to manifest its good will towards Your Majesty, and strongly desire to make possible the establishment of an entente between Your Majesty and the Holy See...We wholeheartedly beg Your Imperial Majesty to give protection to all the Catholics who live in the immense areas of Your Empire, as well as to all the evangelical workers, i.e., European missionaries, so that the Catholic faith can be freely preached in those regions.

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<sup>68</sup> The Second Opium War or the Anglo-French expedition to China was a war pitting the British Empire and the Second French Empire against the Qing Dynasty of China, lasting from 1856 to 1860. It was fought over their conflicting viewpoints on diplomatic relations, trade, the administration of justice and tea.

<sup>69</sup> In the Catholic Church, an Apostolic visitor is a Papal representative with a transient mission to perform a canonical visitation of relatively short duration. The visitor is deputed to investigate a special circumstance in a diocese or country, and to submit a report to the Holy See at the conclusion of the investigation.

<sup>70</sup> The Emperor Xianfeng (咸豐帝), 17 July 1831 – 22 August 1861, was the ninth Emperor of the Qing Dynasty, and the seventh Qing emperor to rule over China, from 1850 to 1861.

<sup>71</sup> Wei, L. (1966). *Le Saint-Siège, la France et la Chine sous le pontificat de Léon XIII*. Schöneck/Beckenried, Switzerland: Les cahiers de la nouvelle revue de science missionnaire, p 8.

But unfortunately, due to the death of the Emperor Xianfeng (in 1861) and the sickness and early death of Mgr. Spelta (in 1862), the letter most likely did not reach its destination.<sup>72</sup> In 1881, the Emperor Guangxu<sup>73</sup> insisted to have diplomatic relations with the Holy See. Then, in 1886, Pope Leo XIII decided to send an ApostolicNuncio<sup>74</sup> to China. Nonetheless, France was opposed to the nomination of a diplomatic envoy and threatened to break its diplomacy with the Holy See.

### **3.2. From the Apostolic Delegation to the ApostolicNunciature in China**

#### *3.2.1. Archbishop Celso Costantini, First ApostolicDelegate to China*

After the atrocities of the Boxer Revolution<sup>75</sup> where tens of thousands of Chinese Christians were slaughtered without pity, as traitors,<sup>76</sup> and the proclamation of the Republic of China<sup>77</sup> in 1912, Pope Benedict XV decided to accelerate the process of Sino-Vatican relations. Finally, the Vatican established its first ties with China in 1922 when it sent its ApostolicDelegate<sup>78</sup>, Archbishop Celso Costantini, an

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<sup>72</sup> Ticozzi, S. (2009, Spring). Lou Tseng-Tsiang (1871-1949) and Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations. *Tripod*, XXIX(152), p. 13.

<sup>73</sup> The Emperor Guangxu, 14 August 1871 – 14 November 1908, was the eleventh emperor of the Qing Dynasty, and the ninth Qing emperor to rule over China. His reign lasted from 1875 to 1908.

<sup>74</sup> ApostolicNuncio is an ecclesiastical diplomatic title (from the Latin word, Nuntius meaning envoy). An ApostolicNuncio is the equivalent of ambassadors of other countries. In Catholic countries, the Nuncio often ranks above ambassadors in diplomatic protocol.

<sup>75</sup> The Boxer Rebellion was a proto-nationalist movement by the “Righteous Harmony Society” in China between 1898 and 1901, opposing foreign imperialism and Christianity. The uprising took place in response to foreign “spheres of influence” in China, with grievances ranging from opium traders, political invasion, economic manipulation, to missionary evangelism. In China, popular sentiment remained resistant to foreign influences, and anger rose over the “unequal treaties”, which the weak Qing state could not resist. Concerns grew that missionaries and Chinese Christians could use this decline to their advantage, appropriating lands and property of unwilling Chinese peasants to give to the Church. This sentiment resulted in violent revolts against foreign interests. In June 1900 in Beijing, Boxer fighters threatened foreigners and forced them to seek refuge in the Legation Quarter. In response, the initially hesitant Empress Dowager Cixi, urged by the conservatives of the Imperial Court, supported the Boxers and declared war on foreign powers.

<sup>76</sup> Charbonnier, J.-P. (2007). *Christians in China*. San Francisco, USA: Ignatius Press, p. 335.

<sup>77</sup> The 1911 revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen overthrew the Qing Dynasty. In 1912, the government of the Republic of China was established in Nanking, marking the birth of the first republic in Asia.

<sup>78</sup> For nations with whom the Holy See has no diplomatic ties, an ApostolicDelegate is sent to serve as a liaison with the Roman Catholic Church in that nation, though not accredited to the government of the state. ApostolicDelegates have the same ecclesiastical rank as Nuncios, but have no formal diplomatic status; though in some countries they have some diplomatic privileges.

ecclesiastical representative of His Holiness the Pope, with no formal diplomatic credentials.<sup>79</sup> In fact, before sending Archbishop Costantini to China as Apostolic Delegate, the Holy See had tried to send a representative to China to solve certain problems related to missionary activity. At that time France had a lot of power regarding the Catholic missions because it possessed the “protectorate” over them. So, when the Holy See assigned Archbishop Costantini to China, it took special care to request that he maintained absolute secrecy about his assignment.<sup>80</sup> The Pope entrusted him to apply to China the spirit of his Apostolic letter *Maximum illud*<sup>81</sup> in order to renew the understanding of the Christian Missions in Asian countries. Pope Benedict XV wanted to create a better way for the Catholic Church to evangelize for the progress of missionary activities especially at that time of the growth of nationalism in China. The task of Archbishop Costantini was then to accommodate the evangelization work, to take care of the local Churches in considering their own cultures and to establish the native bishops. Benedict XV wanted Archbishop Celso Costantini to free the Holy See from the protectorate system and its nationalistic implications, to eliminate the influence of European powers and to reshape the theology in China.

When Archbishop Costantini arrived in China, the Catholic Church was still under foreign missionary control. Nonetheless on his arrival, with zeal, he immediately began to push for implementation of the directives outlined by Pope Benedict XV in his missionary apostolic letter *Maximum illud*. Before leaving for

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<sup>79</sup> Chan, G. (1989, December). Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations: Problems and Prospects. *China Quarterly*, 120, p. 815.

<sup>80</sup> Chong, F. (2008, Spring). Cardinal Celso Costantini and the Chinese Catholic Church. *Tripod*, XXVIII (148), p. 48.

<sup>81</sup> *Maximum Illud* is an Apostolic letter of Benedict XV issued on 30 November 1919 in the sixth year of his pontificate. It deals with the Catholic missions after World War I.

China, Cardinal Von Rossum, the Prefect of Propaganda Fide<sup>82</sup>, exhorted Archbishop Costantini:

Make every effort to implement the thought of the encyclical *Maximum Illud*. The most urgent matter is to hold the national council of bishops meeting as soon as possible”.<sup>83</sup>

Two years after his arrival, Costantini succeeded in holding the so-called *First Council of China*, in Shanghai from May 15 to June 13, 1924. He convened all the foreign heads of Catholic missions in China, Delegates of various missionary institutes, and representatives of the Chinese clergy to plan a general reform of the Catholic Church in China. Together, they addressed pressing problems, such as the tension between native and foreign priests, the promotion of the Chinese clergy and the ordination of Chinese bishops, the creation of new commissions for the work of the apostolate, and the liberation of the Church from the political influence of the French protectorate.<sup>84</sup> Thanks to the work of Costantini, Prefectures Apostolic<sup>85</sup> were headed by Chinese prelates, Chinese priests in increasing number acceded to important positions and missionary training began to emphasize understanding of and respect for Chinese culture. In October 1926, Pope Pius XI ordained six Chinese bishops (the first such ordinations since 1685). By 1933, when Costantini finished his mandate, 19 of the existing 119 ecclesiastical territories were in Chinese

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<sup>82</sup>Now called Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

<sup>83</sup> Chong, F. (2008, Spring). *op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>84</sup>Wiest, J.-P. C. (December 2005). *Celso Benigno Luigi Costantini, 1876-1958*. China Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity, Shanghai. Retrieved August 25, 2011, from <http://www.bdconline.net/en/stories/c/costantini-celso.php>

<sup>85</sup> An Apostolic prefect (or prefect Apostolic) is a priest who heads what is known as an Apostolic Prefecture, a missionary area where the Catholic Church is not yet sufficiently developed to have it made a diocese. If a Prefecture grows and flourishes, it is elevated to an Apostolic vicariate, headed by a titular bishop, in the hope that with time the region will generate enough Catholics and stability for its Catholic institutions, to warrant being established as a diocese.



hands. The prelate also contributed to the idea that the Chinese had primary responsibility for converting their own people when he founded, in 1926, *the Disciples of the Lord (C.D.D)*<sup>86</sup>, a Chinese religious congregation for the purpose of imparting the missionary spirit to the local clergy.<sup>87</sup> The most important Costantini's contribution to improving relations between the Church and the Republic of China was in making Christianity compatible with Chinese culture.<sup>88</sup> Costantini, strongly advocated the development of Chinese forms of expression and, through his influence, Chinese-style buildings, statues, images, and music began to gain acceptance in the Catholic Church. He is also credited with the establishment of Fu Jen University in Peking as China's first catholic university.

The presence and the work of Costantini made possible to improve the relations between the Holy See and China. His nomination was an unofficial way of indicating the end of France's special protectorate over the missions, although the Delegate was not accredited as a Nuncio to the Chinese government. Nevertheless the Chinese authorities were appreciative of this move; at the funeral of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, Archbishop Costantini received the same honors as the members of the diplomatic corps.<sup>89</sup> After ten years in China, Archbishop Costantini left in February 1933 and was appointed Secretary of the *Propaganda Fide* in Rome. On November 28, 1933, Pius XI assigned Archbishop Marius Zanin to this very same post. Even though, this new Apostolic Delegate was not a formal diplomatic envoy, he was received in Nanjing by President Lin Sen on March 14, 1934.

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<sup>86</sup> Congregation of the Disciples of the Lord (Congregatio Discipulorum Domini, CDD)

<sup>87</sup> Wiest, J.-P. C. (December 2005). *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> Tai, R. (2002). The Vatican's Dilemma: Taipei and/or Beijing? In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 604.

<sup>89</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 395.

### 3.2.2. *The Holy See and the Manchukuo*

During that period, China had to face both the civil war<sup>90</sup> and the Japanese invasion. It is important to recall this episode of the Japanese invasion in Northern China in order to clearly understand the position of the Church and its policy. Indeed, the presence of the Holy See in the Japanese occupied territories has been misinterpreted and used as proof of a supposed malicious policy of the Pope toward China. To recall this episode of History, will help to understand the aim of the Church in China and its real interests. It will also show that the Holy See did not have any policy to harm China as sometimes is thought by some or is used by others to justify any mistrust of China toward the Church.

In March 1932, the Japanese created the state of Manchukuo, considered by most historians as a puppet state of the Empire of Japan, and installed Puyi as the ruler of this new state. In 1934, Pu Yi, the last Qing Emperor of China, was officially crowned the emperor of Manchukuo. The League of Nations refused to recognize the legality of Manchukuo. This moral sanction obviously could not be ignored by the moral authority of the Vatican.<sup>91</sup> However, the Catholic Church had vicars and prefects Apostolic in charge of the ten missions in the Manchukuo: eight missions in Manchuria plus the two provinces of Jehol and Hingan which were then annexed to the Empire. As mentioned previously in the chapter 2, the Holy See, as representative

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<sup>90</sup> The Chinese civil (1927-1950) war confronted the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) governing the Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

<sup>91</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2002). Did the Vatican establish diplomatic relations with the Manchukuo? In *The International Symposium on the History of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations* (中梵外交關係史國際學術研討會論文集, Zhōng fàn wàijiāo guānxi shǐ guóji xuéshù yántào huì lùnwén jí). 中華民國九十一年十二月 Zhōnghuá mínguó jiǔshíyī nián shí'èr yuè. Tapei, Taiwan, ROC: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China and the Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University (中華民國外交部贊助天主教輔仁大學歷史系印行, Zhōnghuá mínguó wàijiāo bù zànzhù tiānzhǔjiào fù rén dàxué lìshǐ xì yìnxíng), p. 198.

of the Catholic Church, is concerned about its Catholics throughout the world and with their religious freedom. Consequently, the *Propaganda Fide* entrusted Msgr. Auguste Gaspais, titular bishop of Canope and Vicar Apostolic of Kirin, the task of representing “*ad tempus, donec aliter provideatur*” the Holy See and Catholic Missions to the Manchukuo Government. It is important to emphasize that this mission was entrusted to him by the *Propaganda Fide* which deals with religious matters only and not by the Secretariat of State which deals with diplomatic relations.<sup>92</sup>

The Japanese were eager to obtain official recognition from the Vatican. Well aware of Rome’s reluctance, they did everything to let people believe in an official recognition of Manchukuo.<sup>93</sup> On his side, without any possibility to contact the Apostolic Delegate, Msgr. Zanin in Peking, Msgr. Gaspais felt helpless in dealing with the Japanese requirements and urged the Roman authorities to send a Delegate to the newly established Manchukuo government; but that request was categorically denied by the Holy See. The *Propaganda Fide* proposed Msgr. Gaspais himself as a representative of the Holy See to deal with the local government on issues concerning the Church. However, Bishop Gaspais with his heavy pastoral duties was not enthusiastic in having the task of representative. Rome replied by offering him the possibility to appoint a coadjutor bishop Msgr. Charles Lemaire.<sup>94</sup>

The perspicacity of the Holy See and its smart way to face Manchukuo were

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<sup>92</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2002). *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>93</sup> The Japanese invited Msgr. Gaspais to official receptions together with the ambassadors and he received decorations. He was present at the ceremony of enthronement of Emperor Puyi in the newly built palace of Changchun. He received a first medal in 1935 as a recognition of his social services. In 1937, Bishop Gaspais received the medal of “Grand Officer of the Order of National Support”. In Charbonnier, J. (2002). *Ibid.*, pp.202-203

<sup>94</sup> Father Lemaire was superior of the Kirin Seminary and was consecrated as a coadjutor on November 15, 1939.

destined to have long-term repercussions on the Holy See's relations with the People's Republic of China. The Holy See was in fact depicted by Maoist propaganda as an accomplice of the Japanese occupiers and the Catholic Church as an agency of foreign imperialism.<sup>95</sup> Through the decades, the Manchukuo affair has been presented as proof of the Roman Catholic Church's supposed malevolence toward the Chinese nation and used by Beijing<sup>96</sup> as a justification for its mistrust and hostility toward the Holy See and the Chinese Catholics loyal to the Pope.<sup>97</sup> Bishop Lemaire, referring to the Vatican's intentions wrote this:

“The Vatican never recognized the legitimacy of the Manchukuo Government, neither the legitimacy of Japanese power in Manchuria nor the legitimacy of the Imperial power of Puyi and of his Manchu ministers. The Vatican was too much aware of the situation to be caught, too sincere, too respectful of the violated rights of China and of the sufferings of the Chinese population in Manchuria, a population humiliated and reduced to silence by a State police omnipresent and omnipotent, to act a fool play in seeming to recognize that government and have with it diplomatic relations. On the other hand, the Holy See could not remain indifferent to the situation of the Church in Manchuria... The Vatican was present in China through an “Apostolic Delegate” residing in Peking. But the Japanese forbade the Missions heads (Vicars and Prefects Apostolic) to have any relation with this Apostolic Delegate... Therefore Rome had to nominate or to send someone with the powers – it was “necessary” for the internal and spiritual life of the

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<sup>95</sup> Photos of Msgr. Gaspais attending official receptions held by the puppet Emperor of Manchukuo Pu Yi have been used extensively first by the Japanese as a means of gaining international support to their policy in China and later by the Chinese Communist regime in their struggle against Foreign imperialism. In Charbonnier, J. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 197

<sup>96</sup> On the State Administration for Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of China, we can read an article on *Freedom of Religious Belief*, 16 October 1997, “They [Catholic missionaries] obstructed and opposed China's struggle against fascism and the Chinese people's revolution. After Japan invaded Northeast China the Vatican took a stand which was, in fact, supporting the Japanese aggression. It took the lead in recognizing the puppet Manchukuo regime set up by the Japanese and sent a representative there.” From State administration for religious affairs of PRC. (1997, October 16). *Freedom of Religious Belief in China- 中国的宗教信仰自由状况 (Zhōngguó de zōngjiào xìnyǎng zìyóu zhuàngkuàng)*. PRC. Retrieved November 12, 2011, from <http://www.sara.gov.cn/GB//zgzt/index.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Bozzato, F. (2009). *Heavenly Powers: Holy See Diplomacy toward China (Unpublished master's thesis)*. University of Tasmania, p. 42.

Church”.<sup>98</sup>

This definitely explains that the real main motivation of Holy See was to safeguard the interests of the local Church in Manchukuo and not to give any recognition to this new territory.<sup>99</sup> Even though, one can say that we should probably recognize that the Church compromised in some ways with the Japanese power and gave the impression that Japanese encroachments in China could be tolerated.<sup>100</sup> The Holy See and the Republic of China started formal diplomatic relations in these difficult circumstances with the Manchukuo and in the context of the Second World War.

### 3.2.3. *Archbishop Antonio Riberi, First Internuncio of the Holy See to China*

It was not until 1942 when French influence subsided following international political changes and when France realized that it could no longer hold onto the Chinese Church that the Vatican established diplomatic relations with China.<sup>101</sup>

Lou Tseng-Tsiang<sup>102</sup>, who was Premier of the Republic of China and China's Foreign Affairs minister, played a meaningful role in China's contacts with the Vatican. He summarized his attempts, as China's Foreign Minister, to establish diplomatic relations between China and the Holy See in the following way:

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<sup>98</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 201.

<sup>99</sup> Once Pope Pius XI told Cardinal Costantini after an audience on December 11, 1937 : « Rimanere vigilianti e imparziali. Non dare incarichi a Mons. Gaspais, perchè i giapponesi direbbero subito che il Papa ha riconosciuto il nuovo regime nel nord della Cina » (my translation : Remain vigilant and impartial. Do not give any assignment to Msgr Gaspais, for the Japanese would immediately say that the Pope had recognized the new regime of North-East China). In Charbonnier, J. (2002). *Ibid.*, p. 207

<sup>100</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2002). *I op. cit.*, p. 207

<sup>101</sup> Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 816

<sup>102</sup> Lou Tseng-Tsiang was a Chinese diplomat and then a Benedictine monk in Bruges, Belgium. At the proclamation of the Chinese Republic in 1912, he joined the Party of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, and served as Foreign. He also served as Prime Minister. Later, he converted to Catholicism and became a monk. His monastic name was Pierre-Célestin.

In 1917, the opportunity to proceed further was offered to me. I proposed that the Government reach an agreement with the Holy See in order to establish diplomatic relations between the Republic and the Holy See. And since such a proposal was accepted, I started contacts with the Vatican, who at once gave their consent... The intervention and the systematic opposition of a great European power, that declared that it was acting to 'protect' the Missions, forced us to give up the project... The project had to wait until February 1943, more than a quarter of a century later, to be achieved.<sup>103</sup>

In March 1942, the Chinese mission to the United States expressed the desire to establish formal relations with the Holy See and in June, Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate in Washington D.C. gave, upon instructions, a positive response to the Chinese Embassy.<sup>104</sup> Dr. Hsieh Shou-kang, *Chargé d'Affaires*<sup>105</sup> of China in Switzerland, was assigned as the first Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the Republic of China to the Holy See and his nomination was officially announced on October 23, 1942, in the Holy See's newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. He finally arrived in Rome in January 1943, and presented his credential letters to Pope Pius XII on February 25<sup>106</sup>. This decision had been prepared through the good offices of Lou Tseng-Tsiang and was also probably

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<sup>103</sup> Dom Lou Tseng-tsiang. (1945) *Souvenirs et Pensées* (Paris, Désclée de Brouwer, 1945), pp. 105-106 in Ticozzi, S. (2009, Spring). *op. cit.*, p. 9-10.

<sup>104</sup> Apostolic Nunciature to China. (2002). *In celebration of the 60 years of ROC/Holy See Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, p.1.

<sup>105</sup> *Chargés d'affaires* (ministres chargés d'affaires), who were placed by the règlement of the Congress of Vienna in the fourth class of diplomatic agents, are heads of permanent missions accredited to countries to which, for some reason, it is not possible or not desirable to send agents of a higher rank (although the countries maintain diplomatic relations).

<sup>106</sup> As representant of a country in war against the Kingdom of Italy, Hsieh Shou-kang needed to remain within the frontiers of the Vatican City State. The Vatican tried to delay the arrival of Dr. Hsieh by telling him that his apartment was not yet ready. It was a way for the Holy See to officially announce the establishment of the diplomatic relations with China as late as possible. The announcement was done on October 22, 1942, that is to say six months after the arrival on April 24, 1942 of Ken Harada, the Japanese representant to the Vatican. Hsieh Shou-Kang finally presented his credentials to the Pope Pius XII on February 25, 1943, when one can reasonably think that Japan will perhaps take a long time to lose the war, but certainly not win it. From the note n. 16 p. 353 of Ladous, R., & Blanchard, P. (2010). *Le Vatican et le Japon dans la guerre de la Grande Asie orientale, la mission de Marella*. Paris, France: Desclée de Brouwer.

precipitated by the fact that Japan, at the same time, obtained diplomatic relations with the Holy See. Indeed, Ken Harada was sent by Japan to Rome as its first diplomatic representative to the Vatican in 1942. He should have received the title of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary<sup>107</sup> to the Holy See but Pius XII gave him unilaterally<sup>108</sup> the rank of ambassador<sup>109</sup>. Therefore because of this fact, it is easily understandable that China could not be outdone. Three years later Archbishop Antonio Riberi was sent by the Vatican as the first Internuncio<sup>110</sup> to Nanking, where the Nationalist government of the Republic of China was relocated. The Apostolic Delegation to China became then an Apostolic Internunciature in 1946.

### **3.3. Holy See's Policy in China from Pope Pius XII to Pope Benedict XVI**

#### *3.3.1. Pope Pius XII*

In 1945, Japanese occupying forces were defeated in China and Archbishop Zanin went to Chongqing to celebrate the Japanese surrender. In February 1946, Pope Pius XII elevated for the first time in history a Chinese Bishop to the rank of Cardinal. It was Bishop Tian Geng Xin who was then appointed as Archbishop of Beiping<sup>111</sup>, Hebei province. Then, Pius XII appointed Bishop Paul Yu Bin as

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<sup>107</sup> An Envoy is a head of mission, not considered a representative of the head of state, but nonetheless with plenipotentiary powers (i.e. full authority to represent the government).

<sup>108</sup> At that time, the representant of the Pope in Japan kept his rank as Apostolic Delegate. The Apostolic delegation was not yet elevated to Nunciature.

<sup>109</sup> Ladous, R., & Blanchard, P. (2010). *Le Vatican et le Japon dans la guerre de la Grande Asie orientale, la mission de Marella*. Paris, France: Desclée de Brouwer, p. 351. Ken Harada was a chargé d'affaires of Japan to Vichy France and a diplomat to the Holy See from Japan. He was appointed as a special envoy to the Vatican, and served in this capacity from 1942 to 1945. He was the first diplomatic representative to the Vatican from Japan.

<sup>110</sup> Tai, R. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 605

<sup>111</sup> Through the long history of China, the city has taken on numerous names.. In 1421 when the Yongle Emperor moved the capital of the Ming Dynasty north from Nanjing in Jiangsu Province, he renamed the city Beijing. In 1928, when the capital of the Republic of China was moved to Nanjing, the city was renamed Beiping, meaning “Northern Peace”. In 1949, when the Communist Party of China made the city the capital of the newly founded People's Republic of China, the city's name again reverted to Beijing.

Archbishop of Nanking, Jiansu province and Zhou Ji Shi the Archbishop of Nanchang in Jiangxi Province. Thus, the Pope showed his care for China<sup>112</sup> by establishing officially the Chinese Hierarchy in April 1946.<sup>113</sup> Then, on July 6, Antonio Riberi arrived as first Internuncio in China. In the same year, talks between the Chinese Nationalist government (KMT) of General Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) led by Mao Zedong broke down. Thus, a civil war erupted and ended with the victory of the Communists over the Nationalists, who were fellow citizens. On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong announced the founding of the People's Republic of China at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The new Chinese Communist government affirmed its independence of all foreign imperialism and the diplomatic corps was compelled to leave.

Sino-Vatican relations worsened with the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The new China was hostile to anything reminiscent of western imperialism, including the Roman Catholic Church. Foreign priests were expelled, and many native priests fled overseas for fear of persecution. Archbishop Antonio Riberi, the first Apostolic Internuncio to China since 1946, chose to stay behind in Nanjing (the capital of the Nationalist Government), to continue his pastoral duties even though the rest of the foreign diplomatic corps had left with the Nationalist Government. Indeed, the primary and constant preoccupation of the Holy See is the fate and welfare of Catholics wherever they are. Using this line of conduct, Antonio

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<sup>112</sup> In April 1946, Pius XII created a territorial hierarchy in China; no longer were bishops to be vicars Apostolic with Delegated jurisdiction as titular bishops of nominal sees. From now on they had their own territorial dioceses in China, bearing the name of Chinese cities. The Church was divided into twenty ecclesiastical provinces, each under the authority of an archbishop. Within these provinces, seventy-nine dioceses were created, each under a bishop, and there were still thirty-eight Prefectures Apostolic. Two years later, in July 1948, there were twenty archbishoprics, eighty-four bishoprics, and thirty-five Prefectures Apostolic, giving a total of 139 ecclesiastical circumscriptions. In Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 417

<sup>113</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 415.



Riberi stayed in China and expected a possible solution to preserve diplomatic relations with the newly established government. However, in March 1951 the Archbishop issued a pastoral letter *Ecce Dominus*<sup>114</sup> addressed to all the bishops and priests remaining in the country urging them not to take part in the “Three Autonomies Movement” (self-government, self-support and self-propagation) promoted by the new regime in the administration of Church affairs.<sup>115</sup> The religious policy of the Communists was inspired on atheistic materialism and aimed to the gradual transformation of all religions into an instrument of Socialist reconstructions. The Triple Autonomy Movement was in fact a political campaign, Communist in inspiration. Administrative autonomy means being directed by the Party and rejecting all imperialist influence; economic autonomy means financing oneself by productive activities and possibly grants from the state, while refusing all imperialist subsidies, especially American ones; autonomy in the apostolate means propagating the faith by Chinese people, using Chinese theology and rejecting all foreign missionaries who are “saboteurs, spies, secret agents, reactionaries, antirevolutionaries, etc”.<sup>116</sup> Archbishop Antonio Riberi tried his best to create ties with the newly established Communist government of China which did not accept him as a diplomat. The Communists even referred to him as “the Monegasque citizen” since he was born in Monaco. Because of his pastoral letter against the Triple Autonomy and his guidelines against the Patriotic Movement Party, the Communist authorities accused him of colluding with colonialism and imperialism in exploiting the Chinese; on September 5, 1951 they expelled him.

Despite the reactions of the Chinese Communist authorities against the Catholic

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<sup>114</sup> The Title of the pastoral letter *Ecce Dominus* means Here is the Lord.

<sup>115</sup> Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit* d., p. 816.

<sup>116</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 433.

Church, the Holy See has always shown goodwill toward China. Indeed, Pope Pius XII reacted immediately after the expulsion of its Internuncio by addressing the encyclical letter, “*Cupimus in primis*<sup>117</sup>”, to the bishops, to the priests and to the faithful of China, in which he stated:

We desire above all to manifest our burning affection for the whole Chinese nation.

In this letter, the Pontiff expressed his esteem for China but deplored that the Church was considered as an enemy of China. The Pope recalled that the Church is at the service of God and does not seek any earthly advantages. He encouraged the Chinese Catholics to resist the Communist persecution. On October 7, 1954, he wrote another encyclical letter entitled “*Ad sinarum gentem*<sup>118</sup>” refuting accusations made against Catholics in China, emphasizing that Catholics were not less patriotic than others. He warned of the dangerous principles underlying the movement of the *Three Autonomies*. He also advocated a certain autonomy for the Church of China, provided it remained in loyal submission to Rome. However, the Communist government responded with arrest and oppression. It marked the beginning of the underground Church. From then, celebrations of Mass took place in private houses and Catholics began to live under the permanent threat of denunciation, imprisonment and torture. Mao Zedong launched campaigns of “purification” with the purpose of ousting his supposed enemies until reaching the establishment of the Cultural Revolution. In 1957 the Chinese Catholics Patriotic Association (CCPA) was established to constitute the nucleus of a National Church separated from Rome.

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<sup>117</sup> “*Cupimus primis*” means We desire above all. The text can be retrieved on the website of the Vatican, <http://www.vatican.va>

<sup>118</sup> “*Ad sinarum gentem*” means to the Chinese people. The text can be retrieved on the website of the Vatican, <http://www.vatican.va>

At the same time, in July, Pius XII wrote “Prayer for the Church of Silence”, where he prayed for both the persecuted and their oppressors without mentioning China. Between 1957 and 1962, the National Church elected for itself forty-five bishops despite Pius XII’s strong reprobation and threats with excommunication of the consecrated bishops as well as consecrators. These bishops of the National Church were to work with the remaining twenty previously appointed by Rome.<sup>119</sup> On June 29, 1958, Pope Pius XII wrote a third letter to the Catholics of China, “*AdApostolorum principis*<sup>120</sup>”, in which he made a clear condemnation of communism and the Patriotic Association. In this document, he also expressed his sadness when learning that certain bishops in China were elected and consecrated outside the tradition and discipline of the Church.<sup>121</sup> For Him, the “*Patriotic Church*” was in a state of schism. The Pontiff in “*AdApostolorum principis*” stated:

For under an appearance of patriotism, which in reality is just a fraud, this association aims primarily at making Catholics gradually embrace the tenets of atheistic materialism, by which God Himself is denied and religious principles are rejected.

Pope Pius XII himself was from a well-known family in Rome, even before he was ordained as a priest. Ever since he was the PapalNuncio to Germany, he had been well known for his anti-Communist attitude. When he was made the Secretary of State to the Vatican, his personality and his family connections enabled him to have warm relations with the right-wing leaders in Italian political circles and he had

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<sup>119</sup>Cardinale, I. (1976). *The Holy See and the International Order*. Toronto: Gerrards Cross : Smythe, p. 204.

<sup>120</sup> “*Ad Apostolorum principis*” means *At the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles*. The text can be retrieved on the website of the Vatican <http://www.vatican.va>

<sup>121</sup> In “*Ad Apostolorum principis*”, Pius XII argued on the validity of episcopal ordination inside the Patriotic Church and its illicit character : “*Acts requiring the power of Holy Orders which are performed by ecclesiastics of this kind, though they are valid as long as the consecration conferred on them was valid, are yet gravely illicit, that is, criminal and sacrilegious*”.

a considerable amount of influence in general elections. Above all, the American Cardinal Spellman was a close friend of Pope Pius XII, and through Spellman the Roman Curia got a great amount of financial support from the Catholic Church of America. Given this political background, one has no difficulty in understanding why Mao Zedong viewed the Vatican as one of the imperialists when the US and its associates were regarded as the “great imperialists and lackeys”.<sup>122</sup> The alignment of the Holy See with the western powers against the communist block after the Second World War was one of the difficulties that impaired its relations with the Communist Government. China was aware of the fierce struggle of Pope Pius XII against communism and considered Rome as an enemy. Indeed, Pius XII rejected communism however until his death in October 1958, he did his best to create friendly ties and never ceased to open the doors of dialogue with China even though the situation was very complex. Pius XII, who instituted the sacred hierarchy in China, deplored the episcopal consecrations that had taken place without Rome’s agreement as a very serious act of disobedience. This call to order continues to weigh heavily to this day on the consciences of many bishops, many of whom applied secretly to Rome asking to be recognized.<sup>123</sup>

### 3.3.2. *Pope John XXIII*

Immediately after his pontifical election on October 28, 1958, Pope John XXIII was concerned about the issues of the Church in China. At the consistory<sup>124</sup> of December 1958,<sup>125</sup> John XXIII renewed the condemnation of his predecessor for the

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<sup>122</sup>Leung, B. (1992). *Sino-Vatican Relations: Problems in Conflicting Authority, 1976-1986*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, p. 80.

<sup>123</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 442.

<sup>124</sup> A consistory is a formal meeting of the Sacred College of Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church, except when convened to elect a new Pope (in which case the meeting is called a conclave).

<sup>125</sup>At this consistory Pope John XXIII stated : “*It is Our wish, furthermore, that Our voice (Our admonitions and invitations) should reach also to those who have shown themselves to be weak,*

acts of the *Patriotic Church* and the problem of the ordinations of patriotic bishops that paved the way for a deplorable attempt at schism”.<sup>126/127</sup> However, the word schism was not used again. In *A letter to the Hierarchy in Formosa*,<sup>128</sup> Pope John XXIII expresses his sadness at seeing the Mainland Chinese suffer and also at seeing what once seemed so hopeful, lying in ruins. He tried to provide the opportunity for reconciliation with the Patriotic Church in China by praying that grace will reach and illumine the minds of the “*beclouded and vacillating consciences*” of those who have taken the wrong side.

### 3.3.3. Pope Paul VI

Paul VI became Pope on June 21, 1963 and immediately after his election, sent a message to the Chinese leaders to continue the work of Pius XII and John XXIII. He recalled the care of the Catholic Church toward nations and specifically toward China:

To belong to the Church does not weaken the love of the Chinese Catholic

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*wavering, and frightened ; to be explicit, those who have taken over the places and Sees of sacred pastors by unlawful means and thus, unfortunately, have paved the way for a deplorable schism”.* In John XXIII. (1958). An address of Pope XXIII to a secret consistory of the College of Cardinals, December 15, 1958. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*.(2002).Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University, p. 65.

<sup>126</sup>Catholic Church.(1983). *Code of Canon Law, Latin - English*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Can. 751. Schism is the withdrawal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or from communion with the members of the Church subject to him.

<sup>127</sup>Pope John XIII in an address in 1959 recalled the word “*schism*” he used at the consistory in 1958: “*Pius XII, of venerable memory, repeatedly lamented the sad situation which confronted the Church in some countries. And We, from the very first days of Our pontificate, made his lament and his sorrow Our own, for We were faced by a persecution affecting millions of Our faithful, of different nationalities and languages. Especially in Our Consistatorial address of December 15 of last year, in speaking of a people very dear to Us, we pointed out to the world, charitably but truthfully, that there were some who were anxious to provoke a grievous schism*”. In John XXIII. (1959). In *Sorrows and Joys of the Church, Address of Pope John XXIII to the Faithful on May 17, 1959*. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), 2006, *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit Center, p.127.

<sup>128</sup>John XXIII. (1961). Letter to the Hierarchy in Formosa, 29 June 1961. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), 2006, *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit Center, pp. 131-135.

for the country; on the contrary, it reinforces it and makes the Catholics participate in the spirit of responsibility to the security, the peace and progress of the country. The Church does not want to dominate, but to serve.<sup>129</sup>

Pope Paul VI tried to contact the Communist authorities during the years 1963 to 1965 for the Catholic Bishops of China to attend the so-called Second Vatican Council<sup>130</sup> but it was unsuccessful. He sent another message of Peace to President Mao Zedong on December 31, 1965, but a few months later China started the Cultural Revolution. The Church in China was then persecuted and cut off from the World for ten years.

In 1959, the Republic of China raised its Vatican mission to ambassadorial status. However, it was only in 1966 that the Vatican elevated its Internunciature in Taipei to the Status of Nunciature;<sup>131</sup> that is to say it was an elevation from the level of legation to that of embassy in civil diplomacy's terminology. The seven-year gap, from 1959 to 1966, between Taiwan's raising its level of representation to the Holy See on the one hand, and the Vatican's reciprocation on the other, can be seen as an attempt by the latter to wait for an opportunity to improve relations with China.<sup>132</sup>

In 1965, during one of his visits to the United Nations, Pope Paul VI appealed to the western powers to welcome China among the UN members. In fact, Paul VI desired to save the position of Taiwan at the United Nations but at the same time he advocated the entry of China. By this, he expected to facilitate the mission of the

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<sup>129</sup>Paul VI. (1963). Message to Chinese Leaders. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005* (p. 141). Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit Study Center.

<sup>130</sup> The Second Vatican Council took place to give a spiritual renewal to Catholic Church and reconsider its position in the modern world.

<sup>131</sup> Apostolic Nunciature to China. (2002). *op. cit.*, p.1.

<sup>132</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 817.

Holy See on the Mainland and be able to protect Mainland Chinese Catholics. In his Epiphany discourse of 1967, Pope Paul VI called for better relations with the Mainland Chinese people, for which, he said, the Catholic Church had always professed profound sympathy. Other overtures were made by him in his speech to the F.A.O<sup>133</sup> in 1970, ten days before he undertook his trip to the Far East, and again during his stop at Hong Kong, where he sent his “cordial and sincere greeting” to all the Chinese people, wherever they may be. On the other hand, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the Geneva Office of the United Nations Organization praised Communist China for its exemplary respect of traditional Chinese values in the training of its workers during a speech he gave at a meeting of the International Labor Organization in 1973.<sup>134</sup>

#### 3.3.4. *Pope John Paul II*

Mao Zedong died on September 9, 1976 and many things changed in China. For many years Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping had been trying to launch a big campaign for modernization. Finally, in 1978, after the death of Chairman Mao, the Third Plenum of the XIth Congress of the Party resolutely adopted the new policy of reform and openness. A realistic slogan was produced for the occasion: “Seek the truth in the facts”.<sup>135</sup>

On October 16, 1978, Karol Wojtyła, a Polish cardinal from a Communist country, became Pope John Paul II. At the same time, reforms and social changes started in China. Indeed, China, led by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, began to emerge from its isolation with a modernization policy. Thus, there emerged the possibility

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<sup>133</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (F.A.O)

<sup>134</sup> Cardinale, I. (1976). *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>135</sup> Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 501.

for dialogue with the possible resulting establishment of a Sino–Vatican Concordat. The *Open Door Policy*, that was a part of the modernization program initiated at the Party’s Third Plenum in December 1978, provided the Vatican with a longed-for opportunity to find out about the real situation in China. The long silence, especially during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, kept the Vatican from making any accurate observation and contact.<sup>136</sup> The Vatican tried all possible means to establish contacts with China for the purpose of initiating a Sino-Vatican dialogue in order to work out their differences. It was hoped that a Sino-Vatican rapprochement could be developed now that China had begun to come out from its isolation and involve itself in international affairs, both on global and regional levels.<sup>137</sup>

In 1981, Pope John Paul II went to Manila and met with the representatives of the Christians of Overseas Chinese Communities. In his speech “*True Christians and Authentic Chinese*”, he clarified the Vatican’s policy on China. He praised the Chinese Culture and History and recalled that Chinese Catholics are called to be good Chinese citizens. He explicitly wanted to create ties of trust with China and to improve Sino-Vatican relations. In that speech, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed to China the mission of the Church:

In proclaiming Jesus-Christ as the eternal Son of God and Savior of the world, the Church has no aim than to be faithful to the mission entrusted to her by her Divine Founder. She has no political or economic goals; she has no worldly mission. She wants to be, in China as in any other country, the herald of the Kingdom of God. She desires not privileges, but only that all those who follow Christ may be able to express their faith freely and publicly

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<sup>136</sup>Leung, B. (1992).*op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 190



and live according to their consciences.<sup>138</sup>

All along his pontificate, John Paul II sent many messages of friendship to China in the hope of rapprochement. In his address to the Bishops of the World inviting them to pray for the Church in China, he stated:

Concern for the Church in China, which was always so deeply felt by my recent predecessors Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul I, has become the particular and constant anxiety of my pontificate, as I have shown more than once and in various ways. This anxiety springs from the very nature of the catholicity of the Church, which is one and universal, multiple in the variety of peoples which compose it and at the same time identical in the foundation of the faith and in the bond of communion.<sup>139</sup>

On 25 October 1982, at the commemoration of the fourth centenary of Matteo Ricci's arrival in China, held in Rome at the Gregorian University, Pope John Paul II referred to Ricci's restored tomb in Beijing as a symbol of dialogue and stated:

The tomb of Matteo Ricci in Beijing brings to mind the grain of wheat hidden in the earth in order to bear abundant fruit. It constitutes an eloquent appeal, both to Rome and to Beijing, to resume that dialogue begun by him four hundred years ago with so much love and so much success.<sup>140</sup>

On March 4-6, 1986, the Holy See called a meeting and gathered experts in order to help the Roman Curia to understand the specific situation of the Catholic

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<sup>138</sup>JohnPaul II. (1981). True Christians and authentic Chinese, February 18, 1981. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), 2006, *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit Center, p. 185.

<sup>139</sup>JohnPaulIII. (1982). Pope's letter to Bishops of the World inviting them to pray for the Church in China. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. (2002). Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 141

<sup>140</sup>JohnPaulIII. (1982). Fr. Matteo Ricci established a Bridge between the Church and Chinese Culture. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. (2002). Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 168

Church in China. Indeed, the Pontiff wanted to find a solution to the issue of the Patriotic Church, the ordinations of Bishops, not appointed by Rome, and the Underground Church. The division between patriotic and underground groups engendered great difficulties for the Catholic Church in China. On October 8, 1989, Pope John Paul II was in Seoul for the 44<sup>th</sup> Eucharist Congress and while praying for peace for all nations, the Pope said: “Allow me to mention, in particular, two peoples who are very close to my heart: the peoples of North Korea and in Mainland China”. Regarding the latter, he speaks of his ardent desire to express his deep affection for them in person.<sup>141</sup> Following the Tiananmen Square incident on June 4, 1989, things in China were at a stalemate; the Pope deplored the persecutions of Catholics in China. However, Pope John Paul II unceasingly proclaimed his goodwill toward China and many are his speeches, prayers, and letters showing his desire for rapprochement. He never stopped expressing his desire for the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations even though China did not share his views. The year 1993 was one of numerous initiatives on the part of the Holy See and of the Holy Father. Receiving the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican, Pope John Paul II again expressed the hope that the New Year would bring opportunities for more States to send their representatives to Rome: “I think, among others, of China and Vietnam, of Israel and Jordan, to mention some”.<sup>142</sup> In 2000, the ordinations of bishops without Papal mandate and the canonization of 120 Chinese martyrs on October 1<sup>st</sup> had seriously undermined the process and created more misunderstanding. The canonization of the Chinese martyrs, that took place on the

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<sup>141</sup>JohnPaulII. (1989). I commend to Mary the Peoples of North Korea and Mainland China, October 8, 1989. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), 2006, *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit., p 204.

<sup>142</sup>Charbonnier, J., & Politi, G. (2006). China-Vatican Relations: 1978-2005. In *The Catholic Church in China: today and tomorrow*. Leuven, Belgium: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, p. 141.

very same day as the birth of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, worsened the already complicated status of the Roman Catholic Church in China. Beijing described most of these martyrs as “*evil-doing sinners*” who were executed for breaking the law. From that day, the dialogue with China became truly tensed and difficult. In 2001, Pope John Paul, with great courage and humility, asked for forgiveness for errors and limits of Christians against China in the past. He called again for dialogue and rapprochement with Beijing by stating:

It is no secret that the Holy See, in the name of the whole Catholic Church and, I believe, for the benefit of the whole human family, hopes for the opening of some form of dialogue with the Authorities of the People's Republic of China. Once the misunderstandings of the past have been overcome, such a dialogue would make it possible for us to work together for the good of the Chinese people and for peace in the world. The present moment of profound disquiet in the international community calls for a fervent commitment on the part of everyone to creating and developing ties of understanding, friendship and solidarity among peoples. In this context, the normalization of relations between the People's Republic of China and the Holy See would undoubtedly have positive repercussions for humanity's progress.<sup>143</sup>

Until his death in 2005, Pope John Paul II, with patience and care for China, did all what was possible to create a Bridge with the Chinese authorities, bishops and Catholics. All along the twenty-six years of his pontificate, he addressed sixty times to China through official letters, speeches, messages and greetings. Nonetheless, his courageous efforts did not lead to true and profound dialogue the Chinese government. This Pope who was an important actor of the fall of

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<sup>143</sup>JohnPaulII.(2001). Message of Pope John Paul II, Fourth Centenary of Matteo Ricci's Arrival in Beijing. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005* . Hong-Kong, China: Holy Spirit Study Center, p. 318

Communism in Eastern Europe did not succeed in normalizing relations with China.

### 3.3.5. *Pope Benedict XVI*

With John Paul II's death and the election of Benedict XVI, the Chinese authorities, perhaps only for pragmatic and propagandistic reasons, have started sending positive signs to the Holy See. In an unusual move on the death of Pope John Paul II,<sup>144</sup> Beijing conveyed its sympathies to the Holy See, in April 2005. Liu Jianchao, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, stated that: "the Chinese Government consistently adheres to two basic principles in China-Vatican relations. China is willing to ameliorate relations with the Vatican and it is hoped that the Holy See, under the leadership of the new Pope, will do something that is conducive for the improvement of Sino-Vatican relations". Reviewing the years of Pope John Paul's II's pontificate (1978-2005), China never once distanced itself from these two basic points: severance of ties with Taiwan and recognitions of Beijing as the sole legitimate government of China; and no interference into China's internal affairs.<sup>145</sup>

For the first time ever, the China through the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association sent condolences for the passing of a Pope and the congratulations for the election of a new one. Chinese authorities showed interest in resuming diplomatic relations with the Vatican. This marked the beginning of a new phase that will be developed in Chapter 5.

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<sup>144</sup> Even while the Pope's condition was declining, Beijing sent a message of concern for the Pontiff's health : "We are informed on the state of the health of the Pope. We want to express our preoccupation, and hope that he shall receive good medical treatment and recover his health." In Charbonnier, J., & Politi, G. (2006). China-Vatican relations: 1978-2005. In *The Catholic Church in China: today and tomorrow*. Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, p. 131.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, p. 127.

### **3.4. The ROC and the Holy See in “Ilha Formosa”**

#### *3.4.1. The First Arrival of the Catholic Church in Formosa*

The stable presence of the Catholic Church in Taiwan was not achieved until the Spaniards arrived in 1626. That lasted for only sixteen years, until 1642, when the Spaniards had to abandon the island because the Dutch had expelled them.<sup>146</sup> From their Cagayan base, in the Philippines, the Spanish Dominicans moved northward to establish themselves in Taiwan in 1626. They received the faculty of administering the sacraments in 1627, which was granted by the bishop of Manila.<sup>147</sup> Those Catholic missionaries were the very first to come to Taiwan and the cities of Keelung and Tamshui in Northern Taiwan. In 1642, after the Dutch occupation, they were arrested and deported to Batavia, Indonesia. Then, on May 18, 1859, Spanish Dominicans came from the Philippines, through Amoy, to Kaoshiung, where they established the Church. The Taiwan territory belonged originally to the Fukien Apostolic Vicariate, which was divided in 1883 into the two vicariates of Fuchow and Amoy, Taiwan belonging to the latter. After Japanese occupation on the island, it was only on July 19, 1913, that Taiwan became an independent Apostolic Prefecture. It had, prior to this, two successive prefects Apostolic of Spanish nationality, namely, Msgr. Clemente Fernandez, from 1913 to 1929, and Msgr. Tomas de la Hoz, from 1920 to 1941. Under the pressure of the Japanese government, a Japanese prefect Apostolic was appointed in the person of Msgr. Satowako Asajiro (1941-1946). After the Japanese surrender in 1946, Reverend Tu Min-Cheng, a native priest of Taiwan, was appointed administrator of the Taiwan Prefecture. At this time, there were only twelve priests on the whole island and hardly ten thousand Catholics in all.

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<sup>146</sup>Borao, J. (2001). The Catholic Dominican missionaries in Taiwan. In *Missionary approaches and linguistics in Mainland China and Taiwan*. Leuven : Leuven University Press, p. 101.

<sup>147</sup>Borao, J. (2009). *The Spanish experience in Taiwan, 1626-1642*. Hong Kong, China: Hong Kong University Press, p 175.

In 1948, Bishop Arregui, a Dominican, succeeded Father Tu and fostered the evangelization of the indigenous people.<sup>148</sup>

### 3.4.2. *The Chinese Nationalists and the Apostolic Internuncio in Taiwan*

In 1949, the government of the Republic of China departed from Mainland China after the Chinese Communist Party's victory in the Civil war. Archbishop Antonio Riberi, the first Apostolic Internuncio to China since 1946, chose to stay at his post but he was expelled to Hong-Kong in 1951 by the Communists who accused him of colluding with colonialism and imperialism in exploiting the Chinese. His stay in Nanjing was a very difficult and controversial one: Nationalist supporters blamed him for not following the Chiang Kai-shek withdrawal from Nanjing while the communist allies chastised him, as well as the Vatican, for not recognizing the new government. This made his presence in the new political setting most awkward. After an initial delay, apparently caused by Taiwan's displeasure over Riberi's decision to remain in Nanjing, in 1952, he was posted to Taiwan to resume his duties as Internuncio in China.<sup>149</sup> The expulsion of Archbishop Riberi from China to Hong Kong, based on political and ideological considerations, marked the break of diplomatic relations between Mainland China and the Holy See.

The year 1949 marked a watershed in the Christian history of Taiwan as more than four hundred Catholic priests, both Chinese and foreign, arrived on the island during the 1950s. Conversions began on a considerable scale, among both aborigines and Chinese refugees from the Mainland. In 1952, Taiwan became the twenty-first Catholic ecclesiastic province of China, with an archbishopric at Taipei.

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<sup>148</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007).*op.cit.*, p. 483.

<sup>149</sup> Chan, G. (1989, December).*op. cit.*, p. 816

Father Joseph Kuo, C.D.D., was appointed as the first archbishop. Archbishop Riberi, the erstwhile Internuncio who had been expelled from China came from Hong-Kong to Taipei to preside at the consecration of the new archbishop. By a mysterious dispensation of Vatican diplomacy, Riberi stayed in Taiwan as a representative of the Holy See. The Taipei government, flattered by the creation of the new archbishopric, accepted the creation of an Internunciature at Taipei and sent Dr. Hsieh Shou-kang<sup>150</sup> to Rome as minister plenipotentiary of the Republic of China to the Holy See. The Vatican thus recognized the progress made in the evangelization of Taiwan, but it was also committing itself politically to a Chinese government hostile to the Beijing government. These diplomatic links, still maintained until now, have given the Communist government of China, according to some scholars, an additional argument to forbid Mainland Catholics from owing allegiance to the Pope.<sup>151</sup>

At the same time, on the other side of the Formosan Strait, China established in 1957 the “Chinese Patriotic Association” independent of the Universal Church in Rome and severed all ties with the Vatican. Those loyal to the Pope went “underground” and formed “the clandestine” Church. The Catholic Church in Mainland China has been divided ever since. On the other hand, relations between the Holy See and the ROC became closer and closer. In 1959, Archbishop Riberi was succeeded by Archbishop Joseph Caprio. In the same year the Republic of China raised its Vatican mission to ambassadorial status. HsiehShou-kang, who had

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<sup>150</sup> The Republic of China sent its first representative, Minister HsiehShou-kang, to the Vatican in 1943. Hsieh was succeeded by Minister Wu Jingxiong in 1946. But in June 1949 Wu quietly abandoned his post and left with his family for the United States after a short stay in China, obviously alarmed by the dramatic political changes taking place in his native country. Then, Chu Ying was named Chargé d'affaires, a.i. from 1949 to 1954 followed by HsiehShou-kang, the first Minister Plenipotentiary of the R.O.C to the Holy See. HsiehShou-kang was Minister Plenipotentiary to the Holy See from 1954 to 1959 and then Ambassador of the R.O.C to the Holy See from 1959 to 1966.

<sup>151</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op.cit.*, p. 484.

returned to his former post as Chinese counselor to the Vatican since 1954, became the first Chinese ambassador there. In 1966 the Vatican reciprocated by elevating its legation in Taipei to the status of embassy and the then Archbishop Caprio was promoted to the rank of Pronuncio. The seven-year gap, from 1959 to 1966, between Taiwan's raising its level of representation to the Holy See on the one hand, and the Vatican's reciprocation on the other, can be seen as an attempt by the Vatican to wait for an opportunity to improve relations with the People's Republic of China.<sup>152</sup>

### 3.4.3. *The Holy See, Taiwan and the Entrance of the PRC at the United Nations*

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China many foreign states gradually shifted diplomatic recognition to Beijing which supported the idea that Taiwan was part of China under the "One-China Policy". This culminated with the People's Republic of China displacing the importance of Taiwan at the United Nations, in 1971.<sup>153</sup> The Vatican recalled Archbishop Cassidy to the Vatican, and sent Archbishop Caprio, the Pronuncio to Taipei, on an extended leave a few days before the People's Republic of China was admitted to the United Nations in October 1971. Since that day, when the ROC was forced to give up its seat in the United Nations, the PapalNunciature in Taipei had been headed by a *Chargé d'Affaires, ad interim*. No Pronuncio to the ROC had been named since then. Apparently the PRC wanted to isolate Taiwan further by insisting that the Vatican should cut diplomatic ties altogether with Taiwan. The downgrading of Vatican-Taiwan diplomatic relations was not enough because it was a unilateral

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<sup>152</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 816.

<sup>153</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*. Working Papers, Current Issues in Religion and Politics, University of St. Andrews, the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics (CSRP), Scotland, UK. Retrieved February 10, 2012, from <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/CIRPIII%2011120042.pdf>, p. 19



action and Taiwan still had its ambassador to the Vatican all the same.<sup>154</sup> This Vatican move not only failed to win Beijing's favor but also hurt the feelings of Taipei. The Vatican's downgrading of its diplomatic representation in Taipei was the result of a combination of factors, including the Vatican's desire to re-establish links with the Chinese Church, an increasing international recognition of the Beijing government, and China's expanding ties with the west<sup>155</sup>. Currently, the Vatican is the only European Ally of the Republic of China. However, the tensions in the Straits between the two Chinese governments have put the Sino-Vatican relations in to several tests. Indeed, the Vatican desires to normalize its relations with the PRC but it is also confronted with two major issues imposed by Beijing which requests the direction of the Catholic Church in China and the end of the Holy See's recognition of Taipei.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

The Sino-Vatican relations, established in 1922, have been confronted by many difficulties. However, without becoming discouraged, the Holy See kept its ties with the Republic of China and tried all possible means to establish contacts with Mainland China. Its purpose has been to initiate a Sino-Vatican dialogue in order to resolve differences between the two. The attempts of the different Popes were to open dialogue with the PRC and were initiated out of love for the well-being of all Catholics in China. The downgrading of relations with Taiwan was to release the pressure and the oppression of the Communists on Catholics living on the Mainland. The Vatican's principle aims at negotiating for the normalization of its diplomatic relations with China are to enhance the development of the Chinese Catholic

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<sup>154</sup> Leung, B. (1992). *op. cit.*, p. 233.

<sup>155</sup> Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 817

Church.<sup>156</sup>The Vatican is concerned with its faithful wherever they are in the world; the Vatican is also concerned with protecting the rights, freedom and well-being of the whole human race. This is one of the principle reasons why the Holy See wants to establish ties with China. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the then Vatican's Secretary for the Relations with the States, explained in an interview with the China Times of Taipei on June 3, 1999:

For the Holy See, the first aim of diplomatic relations, with China as with other countries, is that of fostering the life of the Church and of promoting peace in the international context through dialogue.<sup>157</sup>

Through the analysis of the historical evolution of the Sino-Vatican relations, it appears clearly that in order to normalize diplomatic relations, the Holy See has to consider the two conditions of Beijing: that is to say the nomination of bishops namely, non-interference in China's internal affairs and the end of its relations with Taiwan. The latter condition is a real dilemma for the Holy See which is currently the only State in Europe that recognizes the ROC.

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<sup>156</sup>Leung, B. (2005). *Sino-Vatican Relations at the Century's Turn*. Journal of Contemporary China, 14(43), p. 355.

<sup>157</sup> Tai, R. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 610

## **4. The Holy See and the Cross-Strait Conundrum**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In 1951, The Holy See's Internuncio, Archbishop Antonio Riberi, was forced to leave Mainland China. After a brief stay in Hong Kong, he came to Taiwan and established the Nunciature in Taipei. Despite this expulsion, the Holy See has unceasingly tried to keep ties with the Chinese on the Mainland. Indeed, the Holy See has the great desire to keep relations with the great and noble Chinese family. However, because of the tensions in the cross-Strait between the two governments of the ROC and the PRC, the Holy See has been forced for years by Mainland China to make a choice between Taipei and Beijing. The Chinese Communists have requested the Holy See to end its ties with Taiwan in order to establish relations with China. Before any normalization of Sino-Vatican relations, the Chinese government wants the Holy See to recognize the PRC as the sole legitimate Chinese government and to consider Taiwan as an inseparable part of China. This definitely puts the Holy See in a very delicate position that is independent of its own will and makes the mission of the Pope difficult.

While facing some issues with the PRC, the Holy See is enjoying religious freedom that is offered to all in Taiwan by the ROC constitution and government enforcement. Taiwan works in deep cooperation with the Holy See to promote human dignity and to help those most in need. Nevertheless, because of the condition imposed by the P.R.C, the Holy See finds itself in an awkward position. The Pope truly desires to normalize diplomatic relations with China but doesn't want to hurt the feelings of Taiwan who has been so faithful. The Holy See therefore has to find a peaceful way to reach the Mainland Chinese. The vocation of the Church is to announce peace among the nations and Pope John Paul II asked Taiwan

to participate in this sublime mission and play the role of “BridgeChurch” with the Mainland.

## **4.2. The Ties and Shared Ideals between the Holy See and the Republic of China**

### *4.2.1. Human Rights, Peace and Religious Freedom*

The Catholic Church arrived in Taiwan almost 400 years ago. In fact, the first priests came in 1626 and received a warm welcome from the local population. They remained until 1642 when they were expelled by the Dutch. Priests did not return to Taiwan until 1859, arriving in Kaohsiung. In 2009, the Catholic Church celebrated the 150th anniversary of evangelization in Taiwan. For this special event, Pope Benedict XVI sent a special blessing through his envoy, His Eminence Cardinal Tomko, Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and President Emeritus of the Pontifical Committee for the International Eucharistic Congresses. His participation brought to light the Pope’s presence and gave a universal dimension to the celebration. Moreover, among the distinguished guests was the ROC President Ma Ying-jeou. The president commented that Cardinal Tomko previously visited Taiwan twice, in 1988 and 1994. His third visit to Taiwan comes on the occasion of the 150th anniversary celebration of missionary activities in Taiwan by the Catholic Church. President Ma remarked that this demonstrates the importance that the Vatican places on Catholics in Taiwan.<sup>158</sup> He expressed his deep gratitude for the great contribution of the Catholic Church to Taiwan, embodied in the missionaries who brought peace, blessings and development to the country. He

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<sup>158</sup>Office of the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). (2009, November 20). *President Ma Meets Papal Special Envoy Jozef Cardinal Tomko*. Retrieved January 5, 2012, from <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=18233&rmid=2355&sort=0&order=0>

quoted from the Bible encouraging each one to be the “salt of the earth and the light of the world” (Mt 5:13-14).<sup>159</sup>

The bilateral relations between the Holy See and the Republic of China have remained friendly and stable throughout the years mainly because of their common belief in advocacy of freedom, human rights and world peace. Democracy and human rights are essential for the Holy See as they are for Taiwan. As a matter of fact, Taiwan is now counted among the advanced democratic nations. In 2002, on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations, Dr. Eugene Y.H. Chien, ROC former Minister of Foreign Affairs, recalled that the international community has praised the efforts and achievements that Taiwan has made in fostering democracy and upholding human rights. He spoke about how much the defense of democracy is an essential point for the ROC and that has tightened ties with the Holy See. He stated that:

Our being part of the global mainstream of democracy, which drew much of its inspiration from the Christian tradition, has laid down a solid foundation for the friendly ties between Taiwan and the Holy See.<sup>160</sup>

Many are the cordial addresses of the Pope to Taiwan. Most of them are messages of friendship and gratitude for the common shared ideals of service to humankind, of freedom of religion and of peace. In 2008, President Ma Ying-jeou appointed His Excellency Larry Wang as ambassador of ROC to the Holy See.

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<sup>159</sup>CRBCNewsBulletin.(2009, November).*Highlights on the 150th Anniversary of Evangelization in Taiwan*. Retrieved January 5, 2012, from Chinese Regional Bishop's conference: <http://www.catholic.org.tw/en/News/News305a.html>

<sup>160</sup>Chien, E. (2002). Preface. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University, p. VIII.

Presenting his credential letters, Pope Benedict XVI expressed to him how Taiwan makes a valuable contribution to the building of a more secure and stable world. He congratulated Taiwan on being such a good partner in the mission of the Church:

The Government in Taipei has a keen sense of belonging to a world community, a global human family. This is expressed in many ways, not least in the generosity with which aid and emergency relief is supplied to poorer nations.(...) The Holy See is pleased to work together with all those who seek to promote peace, prosperity and development, and appreciates the Republic of China's commitment to that noble cause.<sup>161</sup>

In Taiwan, there is a wide diversity of religions and a real freedom for each person to practice his own belief. This is certainly due to its multicultural history but also due to the religious freedom written in the constitution of the Republic of China. Article 13 of the Constitution<sup>162</sup> of the Republic of China states that “the people shall have freedom of religious belief”. This freedom of religion is deeply appreciated by the Church and permits her to fulfill her spiritual and humanitarian mission without interference or discrimination, for the service of individuals and of Taiwan as a whole. Pope Benedict XVI in the aforementioned address to Ambassador Larry Wang underlined the benefits of religious freedom in Taiwan that the Church is enjoying and which permits the Church to lead her mission. The Holy Father showed his gratitude to the ROC and his desire to cooperate with such a democracy. He said:

Your Government's firm commitment to freedom of religion has made it possible for the Church to carry out her mission of love and service, and to

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<sup>161</sup> Benedict XVI. (2008, November 12). Holy Father addresses new Ambassador of the Republic of China to the Holy See. *L'Osservatore Romano*(46), p. 7.

<sup>162</sup> Office of the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), Constitution, the text of the Constitution can be retrieved on <http://english.president.gov.tw>

express herself openly through worship and the proclamation of the Gospel. On behalf of all the Catholics in Taiwan, I would like to express my appreciation of this freedom that the Church enjoys.<sup>163</sup>

Being free in Taiwan, the Church can participate in Taiwan's progress and serve the poor and the needy and contribute to promoting Human dignity and peace. Last year, in January 2011, Ambassador Larry Wang explained on *Radio Vatican* that freedom of religion is not only a fundamental freedom but a right included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nation's General Assembly. He affirmed that the protection of religious freedom is one of the ways to safeguard peace. He said that:

When hearing the Holy Father's words I cannot refrain from thinking about my country, which is a democracy that embraces religious pluralism and tolerance toward all beliefs. Its Constitution guarantees freedom of religion as a right for all people and no religion benefits from special privileges granted by the government. Consequently, Taiwan is a melting pot of religions, influenced by a Chinese cultural heritage and faiths from other parts of the world. In Taiwan, greater freedom of religion has not led to conflicts among religions. Instead, adherents of all faiths live together in peace and show respect for other beliefs. Interreligious dialogue plays an important role in creating an environment where religious freedom is respected and has deep roots in Taiwan.<sup>164</sup>

Taiwan's constitution provides freedom of religion and the ROC government is the *warrantor* of the practice of this freedom. In Taiwan, authorities at all levels protect this right in full, and do not tolerate its abuse, either officially or privately. Indeed, relations between the Holy See and Taiwan are marked by mutual respect

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<sup>163</sup>Benedict XVI. (2008, November 12), *op. cit.*, p.7.

<sup>164</sup>Wang, L. (2011, January 15). Taiwan's Ambassador to Holy See on Pope's "state of the world" address. (R. Vatican, Interviewer) Rome, Italy. Retrieved from <http://www.fluctu8.com/podcast-episode/taiwans-ambassador-to-holy-see-on-Popes-state-of-the-world-address-15017-82462.html>

thanks to the guarantee of the principle of religious freedom. In Taiwan, the Catholic community does not encounter any specific difficulties. In such an environment, Catholics have been able to contribute effectively to the material and spiritual good of their country. Thus, they have been promoting truth, justice and solidarity. According to the latest statistic of the Taiwan Catholic Directory for 2010, Taiwan is the home of 299,938 Catholics. There are 15 bishops, 682 priests, 93 religious brothers, 1146 religious sisters, 65 seminarians, 321 catechists, 378 parishes, 3 Catholic universities, 29 secondary schools, 11 elementary schools, and 167 kindergartens. The Church also administers 10 hospitals, 7 clinics, 15 orphanages, 20 nursing homes, and 19 centers for handicapped children. Through these numerous institutions and organizations, Catholics cared for millions of Taiwanese and participated in the development of Taiwan.

In 2005, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, former Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See, received from the ROC government, the Order of the Brilliant Star with Special Grand Cordon as recognition for his contribution to diplomatic ties between Taiwan and the Holy See. On this occasion, Cardinal Tauran said that relations between the Vatican and Taiwan will be further strengthened because of the long-term efforts by Catholics that have profoundly benefited the people of Taiwan. He has also praised Taiwan for its long-term aid and assistance to countries in Africa and Latin America -- efforts that have been recognized by the Holy See as actions reflecting the Catholic spirit.<sup>165</sup> Indeed, Taiwan and the Holy See are good partners and share a common belief on human dignity, peace and freedom. In January 2008, confident in good ties with the Vatican, ROC President

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<sup>165</sup>Chiu, Y.-T. (2005, November 26). Chen expects relations with Vatican to improve. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved January 8, 2012, from <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/11/26/2003281811>



Chen Shui-bian asked Pope Benedict XVI to support his country's bid to join the United Nations and to participate fully in other international forums. He told the Pope:

I am confident that with the righteous support of the Holy See and our allies, Taiwan will someday gain a more encouraging response from the international community.<sup>166</sup>

In September 2009, the Pontifical Council Cor Unum<sup>167</sup> held Spiritual Exercises at Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei for presidents and directors of the Church's ministry of charity from throughout Asia. There were 450 participants, including 5 Cardinals and more than 60 Bishops, from 29 nations and 260 dioceses. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, President Ma Ying-jeou met with Cardinal Paul Josef Cordes, President of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, at Fu Jen Catholic University. President Ma said this was a rare opportunity to personally receive good wishes from the Holy See. He also expressed his hopes to continue to strengthen cooperation with the Vatican in the future.<sup>168</sup>

#### 4.2.2. *Humanitarian Cooperation between the Holy See and Taiwan*

The Holy See believes that the appeal to solidarity and concrete action is of primary importance, especially in this period of extreme international instability and

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<sup>166</sup>Wooden, C. ( 2008, January 10). Taiwan's president asks Pope to support bid to join United Nations. *Catholic News Service*. Retrieved November 7, 2011, from <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0800157.htm>

<sup>167</sup>The Pontifical Council Cor Unum for Human and Christian Development is a part of the Curia of the Catholic Church. Its mission is "the care of the Catholic Church for the needy, thereby encouraging human fellowship and making manifest the charity of Christ", and it undertakes this mission by carrying out humanitarian relief operations following disasters, fostering charity, and encouraging cooperation and coordination of other Catholic organizations.

<sup>168</sup>Office of the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). (2009, September 11). *President Ma Meets Pontifical Council Cor Unum President Cardinal Paul Josef Cordes*. Retrieved January 11, 2012, from <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=16346&rmid=2355>

intra-national conflicts. In fact only a solidarity that establishes conditions of justice can help to realize international relations aiming at diminishing the gap between the rich and the poor, between the highly developed countries and the developing countries.<sup>169</sup> Based on the spirit of universal love that is at the heart of the Catholic doctrine, the Holy See has constantly urged developed nations to pay more attention to the wealth disparity between the North and the South, and advocates the forgiving or reducing of the foreign debt of poor nations by wealthy nations, and helping developing nations to break away from poverty.<sup>170</sup>

The cooperation on humanitarian assistance of Taiwan with the Holy See can be regarded as excellent. Taiwan is truly a good partner of the Holy See and has never refused to provide help whenever the Pope has appealed for it. Taiwan has always headed the Holy Father's call for solidarity. For instance, in 1997, ROC President Lee Teng-hui, appointed Vice President Lien Chan as his special envoy to meet the Pope on January 14, 1997. On that special occasion, Dr. Lien expressed his strong support of the Pope's appeal for peace. On behalf of the ROC government, Dr. Lien donated one million U.S. dollars for the refugees and the needy. His Holiness decided to entrust this to the Pontifical Council "*Cor Unum*" for projects involved in the rebuilding of Bosnia-Herzegovina and for the African Great lakes region.<sup>171</sup>

On the appeal of the Holy See, Taiwan has constantly shown its goodwill to help. There are numerous examples such as: the Great Lake in Africa in 1994, the

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<sup>169</sup>Dupuy, A. (2003). *Words that matter. The Holy See in multilateral diplomacy*. New York, USA: The Path to Peace foundation, p. 202.

<sup>170</sup>Chien, E. (2002), *op.cit.*, p. IX.

<sup>171</sup>Tai, R. (1999). Reflections on my mission to the Holy See. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 529.

reconstruction of Sarajevo Churches, the Albanian refugees in Italy and the reconstruction of earthquake-stricken Assisi basilica also in 1997, the needy and the sick in Cuba, the victims of Hurricane “Mitch” in 1998 in four Central American countries, the Kosovo refugees and the victims in the Colombia earthquake in 1999, the tsunami in Indonesia in 2004... More recently, Taiwan has proved once again its desire to help those who lost everything and who have no hope, such as the people of Haiti who suffered extremely after the terrible earthquake of 2010. By charity work and humanitarian concern for the most in need, Taiwan joins the Church in her sublime mission of promoting peace and justice. At the same time, this cooperation strengthens the ties of Taiwan with the Holy See. With great generosity, Taiwan offers assistance to the poor, and promotes education and economic development in order to eradicate poverty.<sup>172</sup>

On April 19 2009, President Ma Ying-jeou, at a reception hosted by the Apostolic Nunciature in Taipei in honor of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI’s fourth anniversary, praised the Holy Father and his dedication, not only to maintain human rights and freedom, but also to safeguard fair treatment and justice. In his speech, President Ma said that the noble ideals and boundless love of the Pope are admirable. He also added that the people and government of Taiwan cherish human rights, love peace, advocate freedom and democracy, and respect religious freedom. Indeed, Taiwan and the Holy See are peace partners and share common ideals. He stated that:

Taiwan has become one of the Holy See’s most loyal partners for charity and peace. We will continue to dispatch agricultural and medical missions to our

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<sup>172</sup>Chien, E. (2002), *op.cit.*, p. IX.

diplomatic allies in Africa, Latin America, and the South Pacific region in hopes of helping the less fortunate improve their lives. We will also continue to enhance exchange and contact between Taiwan and the Vatican, and work with it to promote democracy, human rights, freedom, and peace around the world.<sup>173</sup>

A few months ago, on December 1, 2011, when President Ma met Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of Congregation for Catholic Education in Holy Sees, he stated that Taiwan recently has scored very high in various international competitiveness surveys and is also making every effort to be involved in international humanitarian assistance, as demonstrated by the aid that Taiwan provided to Haiti after its devastating earthquake in 2010, and to Japan after it suffered multiple disasters in 2011. In the future, the government will continue to work to improve its standard of living and will continue to play the role of “peacemaker”. It will also keep in mind the Pope's call for people to involve themselves in humanitarian assistance work.

Indeed, Taiwan has always responded to the appeals of the Holy See to assist the most needy. Similarly, the Holy See has been attentive to Taiwan and has shown its concern when Taiwan faced natural disasters. The Pope sent Cardinal Jean Louis Tauran as his special envoy to offer condolences in the wake of the disastrous earthquake that hit Taiwan on September 21, 1999. Every day for three days, *Radio Vatican* broadcast the situation in Taiwan and on September 26, 1999, at noon, for the prayer of the *Angelus*, Pope Jean Paul II prayed publicly for Taiwan.<sup>174</sup> He said that:

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<sup>173</sup>Ma, Y.-j. (2009). Taiwan and the Holy are peace partners. *Newsletter*(2). Retrieved November 15, 2011, from <http://www.taiwanembassy.org/public/Data/97171355471.pdf>

<sup>174</sup>陳方中、江國雄, Chen, F., & Chiang, G. (2003). *中梵外交關係史 (Zhōng fàn wàijiāo guānxì shǐ)*. Taipei, 臺北, Taiwan, 臺灣: 臺灣商務印書館, Tái wān shāngwù yìn shūguǎn, p. 565.

In these days my thoughts have constantly turned to the beloved people of Taiwan as they recover from the recent earthquake and its tragic aftermath. With profound concern I commend the victims to Almighty God and implore his divine consolation and strength upon all the bereaved. I am likewise confident that the international community will respond with renewed solidarity and ready assistance in the urgent work of relief and rebuilding.<sup>175</sup>

More recently, in 2009, Pope Benedict XVI donated a sum of \$50,000 as a token of his concern for the people of Taiwan, severely hit by Typhoon Morakot.<sup>176</sup> In fact, the Pope was the first Head of State to send a donation to help the victims.

#### 4.2.3. *Recent Agreements and cooperation between the Holy See and Taiwan*

Taiwan and the Holy See have in recent years created and signed different ties and agreements. In 2009, holders of Holy See diplomatic and official passports as well as regular Vatican passport holders will be granted visa-free entry to Taiwan for short stays, with immediate effect. The visa-free privilege for Holy See diplomats or officials and Vatican citizens is part of the government's efforts to cement bilateral relations and promote cultural and academic exchanges. Thus, holders of Holy See diplomatic and official passports can enter Taiwan without visas for visits of up to 90 days, while for regular Vatican passport holders the maximum period of stay without a visa will be 30 days. An official of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that:

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<sup>175</sup> JohnPaulII. (1999, September 26). *Angelus, Domenica, 26 settembre 1999*. Retrieved January 16, 2012, from [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/angelus/1999/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_ang\\_26091999\\_it.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/angelus/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_ang_26091999_it.html)

<sup>176</sup>VaticanRadio. (2009, August 22). Pope's aid for Taiwan typhoon victims. Retrieved 17 2012, January, from [http://storico.radiovaticana.org/in2/storico/2009-08/311200\\_Pope\\_s\\_aid\\_for\\_taiwan\\_typhoon\\_victim\\_s.html](http://storico.radiovaticana.org/in2/storico/2009-08/311200_Pope_s_aid_for_taiwan_typhoon_victim_s.html)

We hope that the new visa-free program will help to further strengthen cultural and academic exchanges between Taiwan and the Vatican.<sup>177</sup>

On the academic level, in the summer of 2009, about 20 students from Taiwan National Normal University went to Rome for a two-week program at the pontifical Gregorian University. In the same year, three pontifical universities in Rome signed cooperation agreements with three different universities in Taiwan. Among them, there are the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross<sup>178</sup> in the Rome and National Chengchi University<sup>179</sup> whose officials signed the memorandum of understanding and addendum at the Vatican on October 21, 2009. Monseigneur Russell, current chargé d'affaires, a.i of the Holy See, said that this opens the way for academic cooperation and educational exchanges of professors and students. For him, when students travel and study in a different cultural context, in a different language, they bring something and they take something away. Student exchanges bring greater understanding among peoples. Greater understanding promotes peace and harmonious relationships among nations.<sup>180</sup>

Then in 2011, a historic agreement was made between the Holy See and Taiwan on the recognition of university degrees. For this occasion, His Eminence Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, and Archbishop Savio Hon, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, met President Ma Ying-jeou on December 1, 2011 in his presidential office

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<sup>177</sup>Wu, S. (2009, September 28). Taiwan grants Vatican passport holders visa-free privilege. *Taiwan News-Central News Agency*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1068254&lang=eng\\_news](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1068254&lang=eng_news)

<sup>178</sup>Pontificia Università della Santa Croce, PUSC

<sup>179</sup>National ChengChi University, NCCU

<sup>180</sup>Russell, P. (2010, March 25). Radio Taiwan international interviews Msgr. Paul Russell. *Radio Taiwan International*. (C. Huang, Interviewer) Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: CRBC NEWS/ Bulletin. Retrieved April 15, 2010, from <http://www.catholic.org.tw/en/News/News308a.html>

in Taipei. This agreement between the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China and the Congregation for Catholic Education of the Holy See is based on collaboration in the field of Higher Education and on the recognition of studies, qualifications, diplomas and degrees.<sup>181</sup> Indeed, this agreement provides for mutual recognition of qualifications between ecclesiastical universities around the world, linked to the Holy See, and universities recognized by the Taiwan Ministry of Education. Thanks to this agreement, titles, diplomas and degrees earned at ecclesiastical universities worldwide<sup>182</sup> will be recognized in Taiwan<sup>183</sup> and vice versa. This will generate a huge number of visits and exchanges, and the subsequent collaborations. With the agreement signed today, Taiwan enters more effectively into the international academic world.<sup>184</sup> This agreement will certainly create closer relations between the Holy See and Taiwan who will have new opportunities to lead projects together and support each other in the international arena.

### **4.3. The Holy See and “the Two-China” Dilemma**

#### *4.3.1. The Holy See and the Article 56 of the PRC Common Program*

The PRC had long since laid down the condition that any nation wishing to establish diplomatic relations with it had to cut off relations with the ROC Its intention was clearly stated in Article 56 of the Common Program as early as 1949.

This read:

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<sup>181</sup>OfficeofthePresidentoftheRepublicofChina(Taiwan). (2011, December 1). *President Ma meets His Eminence Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of Congregation for Catholic Education in Holy See*. Retrieved February 12, 2012, from

<http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=26038&rmid=2355>

<sup>182</sup> There are currently over 650 ecclesiastical universities in the World.

<sup>183</sup> Taiwan has currently 161 colleges and universities.

<sup>184</sup>Bernardo Cervellera, Historic agreement between the Holy See and Taiwan on the recognition of university degrees

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Historic-agreement-between-the-Holy-See-and-Taiwan-on-the-recognition-of-university-degrees-23337.html>

Article 56. The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China may, on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territory and sovereignty, negotiate with foreign governments which have severed relations with the Nationalists reactionary clique and which adopt a friendly attitude towards the People's Republic of China, and may establish diplomatic relations with them.

Until 1978, the United States had been faced with the tricky problem of deciding what to do about its relations with Taiwan. China stuck to its unarguable tenet for normalization: *viz.* the breaking of diplomatic relations between the United States and the ROC, the termination of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of China and the withdrawal of all U.S. military personnel from Taiwan.<sup>185</sup> In September 1978, the U.S. solution to this problem led it to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing and to break off diplomatic relations with Taipei, but the U.S. retained its extensive economic ties with the island and handled inter-governmental relations through an ostensibly private body staffed by government officials.<sup>186</sup> It was not the best solution for the PRC who aimed at incorporating this island into its sovereignty. Yet, it was the best that the U.S. could offer.<sup>187</sup> The Vatican being one of the states that still maintains formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the PRC demanded that one of the conditions for Sino-Vatican dialogue, as proposed by the Pope, and before any possible negotiations could begin, be that the Vatican cut off diplomatic relations with Taiwan.<sup>188</sup> Taiwan is consistently at the top of China's foreign policy agenda, and the prospect of a Vatican concession on this issue would be a large incentive at least

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<sup>185</sup>Clough, R. (1978). *Island China*. Cambridge, Mass, U.S.A.: Harvard University Press, p.4.

<sup>186</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>187</sup>Leung, B. (1992). *Sino-Vatican Relations: Problems in Conflicting Authority, 1976-1986*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, p. 231.

<sup>188</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 232



for further talks.<sup>189</sup> To isolate Taiwan in international affairs is one of the major concerns in Sino-Vatican relations for the Chinese government.<sup>190</sup> However, the Holy See's withdrawal of formal recognition of the ROC would undoubtedly marginalize Taiwan in the international diplomatic arena.

Just before the PRC was admitted to the United Nations in October 1971, the Vatican recalled its Pronuncio to Taipei. As well, the post of ambassador to Taiwan, has remained vacant, a move that hurt sentiment in Taiwan at the same time that it did nothing to improve favor with Beijing.<sup>191</sup> From that day, a Chargé d'affaires, a.i. has been appointed at the head of the Nunciature of the Holy See. Beijing insists that diplomatic ties can be re-established only after the Vatican publicly acknowledges the one-China principle under Beijing's leadership. Given the amount of domestic change in Taiwan since the first democratic presidential elections in 1996, and the fact that the Holy See is the only European state to diplomatically recognize the ROC, the incentive from Beijing to diplomatically isolate its perceived "*renegade province*" is huge. In the continuation of the so-called *one-China policy*, governments officially recognize either Taipei or Beijing as the capital of a single Chinese government. Although the United States refused recognition of the Communist government in Beijing until the 1970s, developing ties with the Nationalists in Taipei, even during that time the recognition was of Taipei as the government of one China that included the Mainland. Once the United States established formal diplomatic ties with the PRC (a process started by President Richard Nixon in 1971 and concluded by President Jimmy Carter in 1979), official

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<sup>189</sup>Leung, B. (1998, March). The Sino-Vatican Negotiations: Old Problems in a New Context. *The China Quarterly*, 153, p. 140.

<sup>190</sup>Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p. 232

<sup>191</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). The Red Flag and the Ring: the dances surrounding the Vatican ties. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 1(3), p. 494.

political recognition of Taiwan ceased as the United States acknowledged the Beijing government.<sup>192</sup>

The downgrading of diplomatic ties between the Holy See and Taiwan has nevertheless not been sufficient for the PRC to consider any normalization of its relations with the Supreme Government of the Church.

#### 4.3.2. *Prudence of the Holy See's Diplomacy in the Cross-Strait*

The Holy See found itself confronted with a political problem that was alien to it. It was exposed, powerless, to the dynamic of the dispute between the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China, and the Internuncio had to leave the continental Chinese soil against his own will. The primary and constant preoccupation of the Holy See has always been the fate and the good of Catholics on both sides of the Strait: proof of this is the fact that, despite the insistence on the part of the political and religious authorities of Taiwan, only in 1966 was the Apostolic InterNunciature in Taipei raised to the level of Nunciature.<sup>193</sup> For the Holy See, the first aim of diplomatic relations, with China as with other countries, is that of fostering the life of the Church and of promoting peace in the international context through dialogue.<sup>194</sup> The Holy See has always remained prudent in its diplomacy and in particular in the triangular relation with the PRC and the ROC. It has constantly recalled the specific mission of the Church to serve everyone and especially those who are oppressed. The Pope is always willing to create ties with the states in order to be able to be close to the ones in need and to promote human rights. Even though

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<sup>192</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 497

<sup>193</sup> that is, to use the terminology of civil diplomacy, from level of Legation to that of Embassy

<sup>194</sup>Chen, F.-c.(2002). *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 210

the Internuncio, Archbishop Antonio Riberi, was expelled from China in 1951, the Holy See has never ceased to send the message of friendship to the PRC government because of its concern for the Chinese.

In 1959, President Chiang Kai-shek appointed Dr. Hsieh Shou-kang as the first ROC ambassador to the Holy See, but Pope Paul VI appointed Archbishop Joseph Caprio, the First Pro-Nuncio to the Republic of China, only in 1966. This seven year gap can be explained by the prudence of the Holy See not to hurt China and its hope to have ties with the PRC. The Holy See cares much for the well-being of the Chinese on the Mainland. Through the years, the Popes have tried their best to keep contact, and show friendship and goodwill toward China. Pope Jean John Paul II's great desire was "to build a world based on brotherhood, in order to create, defend and spread peace all around us".<sup>195</sup> The non-replacement of a cardinal in Taiwan after the death of Cardinal Yupin in 1978 can be interpreted by the prudence of the Holy See not to antagonize the Chinese government. The Holy See is glad that Taiwan shares its common ideals of religious freedom, human dignity and peace. The ties between the two states are marked by mutual understanding and respect. However, the Holy See filled with its spiritual desires to normalize diplomatic relations with China and reestablish full communion with the Mainland Chinese Catholic Church. Because of that, the Holy See has been very prudent and no Pope has yet accepted the invitation to visit Taiwan. For instance, in February 1981, Pope John Paul II, in his Far-East trip, did not accept a proposed visit to Taiwan on his way to the Philippines and Japan to avoid the risk of upsetting Beijing.<sup>196</sup> In 1989,

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<sup>195</sup>JohnPaulII. (2000). Address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China: Holy Spirit Center, p. 406.

<sup>196</sup>Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p.198

The ROC government sent an official invitation to Pope John Paul II to come to Taiwan. In 2002, Vice President Annette Lu, on her trip to Europe for the 51st congress of Liberal International held in Budapest, also went to the Vatican and invited Pope John Paul II to visit Taiwan. Many invitations of Taiwan to the Holy Father have not yet been honored by a positive response because of the risk of upsetting Mainland China. The Holy See certainly doesn't want to create an incident in the cross-Strait and upset China.

Beijing's sensitivity to this issue can perhaps be illustrated by the fact that it refused to permit any Chinese Delegates to attend Pope John Paul II's funeral in 2005 because the Vatican accepted Taiwan's then-President Chen Shui-bian to attend the funeral. In December 2008, Pope Benedict turned down the invitation from the Archbishop of the Taipei Archdiocese to visit Taiwan and join in the 2009 celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Catholic Church in Taiwan, sending a representative instead.<sup>197</sup> While continuing to maintain state-to-state relations with the ROC government and strong Church-to-Church relations, the Vatican has to remain extremely prudent because of the potential negative impact with the relations with Mainland China. It seems that the Holy See prefers not to make any gestures that could be interpreted as "*hostile*" by either of the two sides.

#### 4.3.3. *Taiwan's Concern by the Vatican's Rapprochement Attempts with China*

A few days before the PRC was admitted to the United Nations on October 25, 1971, the Holy See recalled its proNuncio Archbishop Edward Cassidy to Rome. Consequently, in December 1971, Archbishop Lo Kuang of Taipei went to Rome to

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<sup>197</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September), *op.cit.*, p. 497

talk with the Secretary of State, Cardinal Cassaroli, about the position of Rome toward the ROC after it was expelled from the United Nations. Archbishop Lo Kuang also met the Holy Father who told him that the Holy See would keep relations with the ROC Ten months later, on August 2, 1972, the Holy See sent Msgr. Francis Colasuanno, a *chargé d'affaires, a.i.* to the ApostolicNunciature in Taipei<sup>198</sup>.

The Nationalist government in Taipei was very nervous about the developments in the Vatican and its relations with the PRC It was reported that on March 3, 1981, immediately after the Pope's speech in Manila, the Ambassador of the ROC to the Vatican, Mr. Zhou Shou-kai, spoke with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Rossi, at the Vatican for more than thirty minutes on common questions relating to the two states. The meeting was requested by the Ambassador of the RO.C. Then on March 4, 1981, the Foreign Ministry of Taiwan summoned Monsignor Giglio, the *chargé d'Affaires, a.i.*, in Taipei ApostolicNunciature, and requested him to explain once more the relations between Taiwan and the Holy See. The Taiwan government openly admitted that they were closely watching the developments in the relations between the Vatican and Mainland China. In these circumstances the best course the Taiwan government would take was to ally itself with the local Catholic Church for mutual support.<sup>199</sup>

At that time, the Church in Taiwan consisted of 300,000 Catholics in seven dioceses, most of the Catholics being migrants from the Mainland in 1949, and almost all the Taiwan bishops having been born on the Mainland. The Taiwan Catholic Church did not share the same views on the Sino-Taiwan relationship as its

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<sup>198</sup>陳方中、江國雄, Chen, F., & Chiang, G. (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 338-341

<sup>199</sup> Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p. 234.

government. The Pope's proposal for rapprochement with Mainland China met with no opposition or nervousness, because the Taiwan Catholics understood that the motivation behind the Vatican's gesture was pastoral, for the sake of Catholics in China. They saw that the attempt made by the Pope to open dialogue with the PRC was for the sake of the Church on the Mainland, and that the downgrading of relations with the Taiwan Church was to release pressure by the government on Catholics on the Mainland.<sup>200</sup> In fact, the Hierarchy of the Taiwan Church is not directly concerned with relations between the ROC and the Holy See. The Church of Taiwan is connected to the Pope by spiritual relations and not by diplomatic relations. The Pope has always kept the same relations with the Church in Taiwan even though the Holy See downgraded its relations with Taiwan. Through the years, the Taiwan Church remained faithful to the Pope, who asked her in 1984 to play the role of *Bridge Church*. The situation of the leaders of the Catholic Church in Taiwan was not so easy and comfortable because of the policy of the government of Taiwan, which requested no contact of its people with the Mainland. The Taiwan Catholic Church as well as the Taiwan government felt very uneasy when suggestions were made to the Vatican to sever diplomatic ties with Taiwan in order to initiate contact with China. The Vatican would therefore have to close the PapalNunciature in Taiwan, while the Taiwanese Chinese ambassador to the Holy See would have to be recalled, and be replaced by a special PapalDelegate of non-diplomatic nature in Taipei. Under pressure from the Taiwan government, the Catholic Church in Taiwan tried to lobby the Vatican officials not to sacrifice the Church of Taiwan for the sake of the Church on the Mainland. As a consequence, the Vice-Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Lourdusamy, was invited to visit Taiwan for the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of Matteo

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<sup>200</sup>Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p. 234.

Ricci in China in 1983. Then the President of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, Cardinal Gantin, was asked to visit Taiwan on February 17, 1984 so that the Taiwan Bishops could voice their discontent about the possible move of the Vatican towards the PRC. This provided an occasion for them to express their anxiety at being betrayed if the normalization of Vatican-China relations were to be made at their expense. They hoped Cardinal Gantin would be sympathetic towards them and view the severing of diplomatic rites from their standpoint of justice and peace.<sup>201</sup>

Eventually all seven members of the Taiwan Chinese Bishop's Conference headed by its President, Archbishop Lo Kuang, were able to go to the Vatican on February 1984 to have a "dialogue" with the Pope and the high-ranking Vatican officials, including the Under-Secretary of State, Martinez Solmalo, and the Foreign Minister, Cardinal A. Silvestrini. In several sessions, they had long discussions with the Vatican officials and with the Pope on their disagreement of the Vatican's policy towards Mainland China. They challenged the views of the Vatican on the possible severing of diplomatic ties with Taiwan and remarked that this would be a great blow to the morale of Taiwan Catholics. Their fear of being victimized by the Vatican in its wooing of Mainland China was also explained. They requested to be kept directly informed of the Vatican's future moves towards Mainland China. In this encounter and dialogue, which was loaded with tension, the Vatican was able to skillfully reassure these seven anguished bishops, backed up by their own government that the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations would not be at their expense. The Vatican promised them that in the future if there were to be any move towards the PRC or the Catholic Church in China, the Taiwan Chinese Bishop's

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<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235- 236.

Conference would be the first to be told.<sup>202</sup>

On the diplomatic front, the Vatican has obviously been making overtures to the Chinese Government by lowering its level of diplomatic representation in Taiwan. Any further lowering of status would mean either vacating the *chargé d'affaires* or breaking off diplomatic relations, and maintaining only religious ties by posting a non-diplomatic Apostolic Delegate to Taipei. Whether the Vatican is willing to take such a drastic step or not will depend very much on the concessions made by Beijing on other issues, such as the self-appointment of bishops and the recognition of the Pope as the head of the universal Church.<sup>203</sup> On February 11, 1999, while responding to questions from journalists in Rome, Cardinal Sodano, Secretary of State of the Holy See, commented that the Vatican was ready to transfer its Nunciature from Taipei to Beijing “not tomorrow, but this very night, if Chinese authorities were to permit it”.<sup>204</sup> These words led to extreme interpretations in many quarters. Both Beijing and Taipei denied having any knowledge of the implied Vatican move. Beijing also reiterated its two known pre-conditions for any rapprochement between the two sides. Two weeks later, it was reported by the Free China Journal, that Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, of the Vatican Secretariat for Relations with States, had assured Taiwan Foreign Minister, Jason Hu Chih-chiang, that “the Holy See will not sacrifice Taiwan’s interest simply to accommodate requests from China”.<sup>205</sup> In fact, by the statement of Cardinal Sodano, the Holy See

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<sup>202</sup>Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>203</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations: Problems and Prospects. *China Quarterly*, 120, p. 828.

<sup>204</sup> And he added: “The Taipei Nunciature is already the Chinese Nunciature. First it was in Beijing, then in Nanking, where the Nuncio was repressed and constrained to transfer to Hong Kong and then to Taiwan. Moving it back to Beijing won’t be a breaking of relations with Taiwan but a returning of the Nunciature to its initial location.”

<sup>205</sup>Charbonnier, J., & Politi, G. (2006). China-Vatican relations: 1978-2005. In *The Catholic Church in China: today and tomorrow*. Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institut, p. 147.



was trying to initiate immediate talks with Beijing on all Church matters regardless of the existing political system. Cardinal Sodano's remarks were a sign of openness and expressed a desire to initiate a discussion with the PRC. He wanted to urge religious freedom on Mainland China. Indeed before any move of the Holy See, it is clear that the question of religious freedom, human rights and the appointment of bishop on Mainland China must be clarified. Dr. Tou Chou-seng, former ROC ambassador to the Holy See, once said: "China uses Taiwan as a pretext, while the real problem is that of religious freedom".<sup>206</sup> However, Taiwan was very concerned about this and the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted its embassy to the Holy See in order to obtain a detailed clarification of this matter. It then published a press release on the peaceful and stable relations with the Vatican:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would first like to point out that an official media spokesperson of the Vatican on Dec. 15 of this year publicly and clearly affirmed that the state of affairs has not changed since August of this year, when the Vatican issued a statement declaring that it had had no concrete communication with Mainland Chinese authorities. In addition, Vatican authorities have on a number of occasions emphasized to the ROC embassy in the Holy See that the Vatican has not had concrete contact with Mainland China, and that so-called normalization of relations is not in progress.<sup>207</sup>

In the *China Times* of Taipei, on June 3, 1999, Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, stated that:

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<sup>206</sup>Eunice, K. Y. (2005, May 19). Taiwan Remains a Question as Vatican-China Relations Progress. *Christian Today*. Retrieved January 12, 2012, from <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/taiwan.remains.a.question.as.vatican.china.relations.progress./2922.htm>

<sup>207</sup>RepublicofChina – Government EntryPoint.(1999). *Government stance on reported PRC-Vatican contact*. Retrieved February 8, 2012, from Government Entry Point: <http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=11107&ctNode=1933&mp=999>

For the Holy See, the first aim of diplomatic relations, with China as with other countries, is that of fostering the life of the Church and of promoting peace in the international context through dialogue. With Taiwan our relations are marked by mutual respect: thanks to the guarantee of the principle of religious freedom, the Catholic community has not encountered difficulties, and it has, moreover, contributed efficaciously to the material and spiritual good of the country.<sup>208</sup>

Nevertheless, the same Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran also told the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* ““We are aware that in order to normalize our relations with Beijing, we will have to modify the form with Taipei”. He added: “We are willing to negotiate”.<sup>209</sup>

In 2002, on her way to Hungary, the ROC vice president, Annette Lu, spent a short time at the Vatican and met with Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran. The two officials exchanged views on religious freedom and human rights. Annette Lu told Archbishop Tauran that Taiwan shares the Vatican's concern for the followers of Catholicism on the Mainland. “But it would violate the spirit of this religion if the Holy See breaks off relations with the ROC because of such concerns”, Lu said, suggesting that Taiwan's own Catholics are no less important. She suggested a parallel approach that would allow the Vatican to improve relations with the Mainland while, at the same time, enhance cooperation with Taiwan.<sup>210</sup>

However, it is clear that the Holy See wants to establish relations with the

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<sup>208</sup>Tai, R. (2002). The Vatican's Dilemma: Taipei and/or Beijing? In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University, pp. 610- 611.

<sup>209</sup>Stanley, A. (1999, March 23). Vatican to Review Taiwan Ties. *The New-York Times*. Retrieved 12 12, 2011, from <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/23/world/vatican-to-review-taiwan-ties.html>

<sup>210</sup>Lu, M. (2002, March 29). Successful end to Annette Lu's visit to Europe. *Taiwan Today*. Retrieved January 18, 2012, from <http://taiwantoday.tw/ct.asp?xItem=19279&CtNode=103>

Mainland. Indeed, because of the vocation of the Church to spread the Gospel and to serve all human beings, the Pope cannot ignore Mainland China. In Hong Kong, The Sunday Examiner of April 16th 2005 quoted Bishop Joseph Zen Ze-kiun: “The Holy See is thinking of giving up Taiwan. This is a difficult decision, but it has decided to do it. If the Holy See does not establish ties with China, Catholics there will not have real freedom”.<sup>211</sup> In October 2005, Cardinal Sodano said again that the Holy See would soon switch ties to Beijing. The Director General of the ROC Department of European Affairs, Larry Wang, currently ROC ambassador to the Holy See, said that Sodano's statement-- that the Vatican was ready to move its Nuncio, or ambassador, from Taiwan to Beijing immediately -- matched exactly the remarks he made in 1999 in an attempt to urge greater religious freedom in China. He said that Cardinal Sodano made the remarks in response to a question from a reporter. It's a passive response, not a deliberate signal. The Vatican had broken off official communications with Beijing in 2000 and it had been difficult to resume official contact. Therefore, Larry Wang said that:

Perhaps it's because of the lack of an official communication channel that Cardinal Sodano chose to make such remarks again”.<sup>212</sup>

The price to pay by Taiwan to let the Holy See go to Beijing to serve the Chinese on the Mainland seems to be very heavy. As matter of fact, in 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that it understands the difficulties the Vatican faces when trying to expand ties with China and protect religious freedom, but stressed

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<sup>211</sup>Goff, P. (2005, Avril 10). Vatican will abandon Taiwan to win China's Catholics. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved November 12, 2011, from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/1487535/Vatican-will-abandon-Taiwan-to-win-Chinas-Catholics.html>

<sup>212</sup>Chang, Y.-p. (2005, November 10). Vatican remarks nothing new: MOFA. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved December 11, 2011, from <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/11/10/2003279525>

that Taiwan must be treated with dignity and respect throughout the process.<sup>213</sup> However, the Holy See will not so easily abandon Taiwan at any price. In November 2005, Cardinal Tauran said about the relations with China that:

The Vatican would not abandon Taiwan even if it opens an embassy in China.(...) The Holy See would find an “appropriate way” to maintain ties with Taiwan. When religious freedom is realized in China, then the Holy See is ready to change the nature of relations with Taiwan. If and when the normalization [of relations with China] happens, the Holy See will not abandon Taiwan.<sup>214</sup>

Cardinal Tauran underlined a very important point about religious freedom in China. According to the moral teachings of the Church: “The end does not justify the means”. It is obvious that the Vatican will not sacrifice its moral principles on religious freedom and human dignity in order to have diplomatic ties with China. As long as China will not show a clear sign of adopting and applying religious freedom in its policy, the Holy See won’t go further in its relations with the Mainland.

The Holy See is currently the only European State to officially recognize the ROC government but the most influential of the states to have formal diplomatic ties with Taipei. If the Holy See withdrew its recognition of the Taipei government and removed its ApostolicNunciature from Taiwan this would strike a serious blow to Taipei, diplomatically. In a 2005 interview with John Allen, a Vatican correspondent of the National Catholic Reporter, Dr Tou Chou-Seng said that:

The Holy See is the only European Nation with which we still have relations.

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<sup>213</sup>Chang, Y.-p. (2005, November 24). MOFA urges the Vatican to be fair .Taipei Times. Retrieved October 21, 2011, from <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/11/24/2003281473>

<sup>214</sup>Staffwriters withagencies. (2005, November 23). Taiwan Quick Take.Taipei Times. Retrieved December 3, 2011, from <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/11/23/2003281360>

We're encountering huge difficulties in the international community, and the Vatican is very important to us. If the Vatican were to drop Taipei for Beijing, we would feel like we've lost our friends.<sup>215</sup>

The fact is the Holy See has to adopt a balanced cross-Strait policy in order not to make a choice between Taipei and Beijing, in conformity with the teachings of the Church: justice and peace. Above all, China must make a considerable effort on religious freedom for the Holy See to move its Nunciature from Taipei to Beijing. In the same interview, Dr. Tou said that:

There will be no change in relations between the Vatican and Mainland China in the foreseeable future, because China is unlikely to make even minimal concessions on religious freedom. Once the people of Mainland China enjoy religious freedom, the demand for other freedoms will follow. The regime is afraid that it will become a tidal wave and things will get out of control.<sup>216</sup>

It will therefore be interesting to study, more deeply in another chapter, the religious policy of Mainland China; this may provide insight as to whether or not there is any possibility for the Vatican to make such a move and to think about any decision of the Holy See toward Taiwan.

#### **4.4. Pax Vobiscum: Cross-Strait Tensions and Papal Exhortations to dialogue**

##### *4.4.1. The Church of Taiwan : a Bridge-Church*

The *ad limina*<sup>217</sup> visit of the Taiwan bishops in 1984 was historical. During the

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<sup>215</sup>Allen, J. (2005, November 25). China, Taiwan and the Vatican. *National Catholic Reporter*. Retrieved February 2, 2012, from <http://www.nationalcatholicreporter.org/word/word112505.htm>

<sup>216</sup>Allen, J. (2005, November 25), *Ibid*.

<sup>217</sup>In the Roman Catholic Church, a quinquennial visit ad limina or more properly, quinquennial visit ad limina apostolorum or simply an ad limina visit means the obligation of residential diocesan bishops and certain prelates with territorial jurisdiction (such as territorial abbots), of visiting the

late 1970s, whenever the “China Question” was discussed in Rome, it was treated as if it did not really concern Taiwan directly, until the Taiwan bishops, during their *ad limina* visit in 1984, clearly voiced their disagreement about this one-sided interest of the Holy See. It was also during that visit that the bishops told the Holy Father: “As far as the relation with the PRC is concerned, please decide whatever you consider necessary for the good of the Universal Church. We accept your decision.” These words were the fruit of long reflection and prayer on the part of the Taiwan bishops among themselves, and also of frank and brotherly exchange between the Taiwan bishops and the Vatican authorities in Rome; the latter previously might have failed to appreciate the patriotic feelings of the Taiwan bishops for their motherland. From this exchange a new understanding between the Church of Taiwan and the Holy See was born, sealed by the historic call of Pope John Paul II to the Church of Taiwan to help him open the road towards the Church in Mainland China. The Pope reminded them of their “beautiful task of being a Bridge-Church for your compatriots in Continental China”.<sup>218</sup>

In his address to the Taiwan Bishops, Jean Paul II recalled the beauty of the Chinese culture and the will of the Church to reach the Chinese in order to proclaim the message of God. He stated:

For you are Chinese and proud of it. You belong to a great people, representing a quarter of humanity. A people great not only by its number but also above all by reason of its culture and its values. An industrious people too, whose influence upon the peace and well-being of humanity today and tomorrow cannot be ignored. The Church has something to share with the

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thresholds of the [tombs of the] Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul, and of meeting the Pope to report on the state of their dioceses or prelatures.

<sup>218</sup>Heyndrickx, J. (2005, Summer). John Paul II, the Pope of dialogue and of the "unfinished encounter" with the PRC *Tripod*, XXV(137), p. 39.

people concerning God and man. She wishes to offer to this people the proclamation of the truth which she received from the Apostles: "...there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all"<sup>219</sup> (1 Tim 2:4-5)

The Pope asked the Taiwan Church to be the Bridge between the Chinese Catholic Church and the universal Church. In so doing, the Vatican completely won over the Taiwan Bishops, by giving them the high honor and privilege of reuniting their fellow Catholics on the Mainland with the Universal Church. For the Taiwan Catholic Church it was an honor and a privilege as well as a moral responsibility to play the role of Bridge-builder, so that the Chinese Catholics astray on the Mainland could be reunited in the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church. Archbishop Lo Kuang, the President of the Taiwan Chinese Bishop's Conference seriously took the lead in the enterprise by taking up the work of blending Chinese culture with Christianity and hopefully later to have the acculturated Christian message brought to the Mainland. With much pride and honor he accepted that the Taiwan Church should be the bastion for the revival of the Mainland Church through cultural adaptation, and called upon the Catholics in Taiwan to shoulder this grave responsibility entrusted to them by the Pope.<sup>220</sup> Owing to political conditions, the Taiwan Catholic Church was not free to be the mediator or to facilitate any informal political interaction between the Vatican and the PRC. This was because the Nationalist government found it difficult to tolerate any attitude which was sympathetic to Communism. On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, the Communists distrust the Catholic Church of Taiwan. This is not simply because it has some senior clergy who are known as Nationalist supporters, but because Taiwan Catholics are suspected of being loyal to the Vatican

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<sup>219</sup>John Paul III. (2006). To the Taiwan Bishops and the Chinese Diaspora: "Be a Bridge-Church". In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong Kong, China, China: Holy Spirit Study Center, p. 263.

<sup>220</sup>Leung, B. (1992), *op. cit.*, p. 237

and their activities are suspected to be guided by the interests of the Vatican.<sup>221</sup>

Cardinal Shan<sup>222</sup> wrote that faced with growing relations between the PRC and the Church, the Taiwanese Catholic Church has found itself in an awkward situation. On this, since 1984, Pope John Paul II has said the same thing and hoped that the Taiwan Church could serve as the role of a BridgeChurch. That means that through the example set by the Taiwan Catholic Church, the authorities on the other side of the Taiwan Straits can realize that a local Church with close ties and subordinate relationship with the Church in Rome can at the same time enjoy a sufficient level of self-determination. More positively, it also means an appeal to the Taiwan Church to provide assistance to the Mainland Chinese Church in terms of manpower and spiritual support. This will be done to allow the development of a really self-determinate local Church and to help build normal relations with the Holy See. Cardinal Shan stated that just like common ROC citizens who wish to see peace and harmony between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, the Taiwanese Catholic Church also wishes to see improvement in PRC-Vatican relations, as well as real freedom in the Catholic Church on Mainland China. He hopes that such improvement can contribute to better relations between Taiwan and the PRC.<sup>223</sup>

On January 11, 2005, ROC Ambassador Larry Wang, recalled on Radio Vatican how much the Church in Taiwan is taking seriously its responsibility to play the role of “BridgeChurch” as given to it by John Paul II in 1984. He underlined that

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<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237

<sup>222</sup> Paul Cardinal Shan Kuo-hsi, S.J.( 單國璽) Bishop Emeritus of Kaohsiung, Taiwan

<sup>223</sup> Shan, P. (2002). Preface. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*, Taipei: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University, p. V.



Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei does not miss any occasion to create ties with the Mainland Chinese. In fact, Fu Jen University held an International Symposium on April 2010, in Commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the passing of Matteo Ricci. This event gathered about 200 participants, among whom were many eminent scholars and sinologists from Europe, the United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the rest of Asia, but especially from Mainland China. Ambassador Wang qualified this event as “a remarkable event and a sign of the changing political climate”. Moreover, in this interview he recalled that Fu Jen University has recently welcomed seminarians and religious in its Faculty of Theology, which shows a clear sign of connection and exchange with the Mainland. He said:

We fully understand the Holy Father’s concern for the situation, and China’s Catholic communities in Mainland China. I can report to you that the Church in Taiwan has not forgotten to play the role of “BridgeChurch” as she has been asked to do by the Holy Father.<sup>224</sup>

#### 4.4.2. *Encouragements of the Holy See for Peace Between China and Taiwan*

The Holy See has always rejoiced when Mainland China and Taiwan have taken initiatives and steps for a better mutual understanding. Indeed, the call of the Pope to the Church of Taiwan to be a “BridgeChurch” was an invitation to create peaceful ties with China. After the simultaneous accession of Beijing and Taipei to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Pope made an encouraging statement in His annual address to the Diplomatic Corps, accredited to the Holy See, on January 10, 2002:

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<sup>224</sup> Wang, L. (2011, January 15). Taiwan's Ambassador to Holy See on Pope's "state of the world" address. (R. Vatican, Interviewer) Rome, Italy. Retrieved from <http://www.fluctu8.com/podcast-episode/taiwans-ambassador-to-holy-see-on-Popes-state-of-the-world-address-15017-82462.html>

I am also pleased to mention the good news...Since last November 2001, delegations of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China have taken their seats in the World Trade Organization. May this positive development help prosper all the efforts which have been made on the difficult path of rapprochement.<sup>225</sup>

In politics, a new world order has not yet taken shape since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990's. However, a world trade order has been established through the World Trade Organization. This intergovernmental trade organization offers Beijing and Taipei the opportunity to use its system of rules and dispute settlement as an instrument of peace between peoples. It is therefore hoped that both sides of the Taiwan Strait will take advantage of the WTO mechanism for the confidence-building which is necessary for a constructive dialogue to resolve their differences and disputes.<sup>226</sup>

In 2008, since Ma Ying-jeou became the ROC President, his administration has decided to lead the so-called "*flexible diplomacy*" policy. The essence of this policy is an accommodation of Taiwan's foreign policy and Mainland policy. Taiwan will pursue its diplomacy with the precondition of maintaining friendly and cooperative relations with Mainland China. Taiwan pursues its foreign policy based on accepting the so-called (19)92 consensus (that is, one China with different interpretation). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China declares that it has implemented this policy based on the principles of "dignity, autonomy, pragmatism, and flexibility", that is, this policy aims to allow Taiwan to forge ahead with its

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<sup>225</sup>John Paul III. (2002). Address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal documents related to China: 1937-2005*. Hong-Kong, China: Holy Spirit Study Center, p. 407.

<sup>226</sup>Tai, R. (2001). Globalization: challenges and opportunities for the Republic of China. In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.: Institute of Catholic History, Fujen Catholic University, p. 580.

diplomatic work and find a modus vivendi for its diplomacy.<sup>227</sup> With China's rise, President Ma has chosen "*pragmatism*" to redefine the cross-Strait relations. In order to resume and institutionalize the cross-Strait dialogue and exchanges, Ma Ying-jeou has implemented several political and institutional frameworks: The "1992 Consensus", the "Three No's policy" (no unification, no independence and no use of force in the Strait), the "Mutual Non-Denial" principle, the flexible diplomacy, and the transformation of the national identity toward a more Chinese Taiwan. Ma diffused the tensions with China with the economic agreements signed in 2008, the ECFA<sup>228</sup>, the creation of food protection mechanism, juridical protection and financial protection, cross-Strait direct flights and Taiwan's opening to Chinese tourists... He restored on December 15, 2008 the so-called three links with China (direct trade, postal services, and transportation links between Taiwan and China). All this has contributed to the strengthening of Taiwan's economic and cultural ties with Mainland China. In his inaugural address in 2008, called *Taiwan's Renaissance*, Ma Ying-jeou said he hopes that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can seize this historic opportunity to achieve peace and co-prosperity and that the normalization of economic and cultural relations is the first step to a win-win solution. This *flexible*

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<sup>227</sup>Wang, K. (2011, February). Taiwan's Diplomatic Policy under the MA Ying-jeou Administration. Palo Alto, USA. Retrieved October 15, 2011, from [http://iis-db.stanford.edu/evnts/6065/Taiwan%27s\\_diplomatic\\_policies.pdf](http://iis-db.stanford.edu/evnts/6065/Taiwan%27s_diplomatic_policies.pdf), p. 1.

<sup>228</sup>ECFA (Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement). The MAC (Mainland Affairs Council) gives on its website <http://www.mac.gov.tw/public/data/051116322071.pdf> the main objectives of the ECFA that are :

(1) To promote the normalization of cross-strait economic and trade relations: although both sides of the Taiwan Strait are currently members of the WTO, many restrictions in cross-strait trade and commerce remain. (2) To avoid Taiwan being marginalized by regional economic integration : The global trend of regional economic integration has led to the signing of approximately 247 free trade agreements (FTAs) in the world so far. Given that signatories provide tariff exemptions on a reciprocal basis, failing to sign FTAs with key trading partners puts Taiwan at risk of being marginalized and losing its competitiveness in major markets. Signing agreements with Mainland China, Taiwan's main export market, will help us participate in regional economic integration and mitigate the risk of economic marginalization. (3) To enhance Taiwan's position as a platform for regional investment : Signing trade agreements (arrangements) with Mainland China will offer incentives for transnational enterprises to use Taiwan as a trade and investment springboard to the East Asia market, which will help Taiwan to better integrate into the global trading system.

*diplomacy* has defused tensions across the Taiwan Strait, bolstered Taiwan's diplomatic relations and international space through pragmatic means, and earned considerable recognition from the international community.<sup>229</sup> The improvements in relations between Taiwan and Mainland China with this flexible diplomacy policy are certainly good for the regional peace and stability but also should facilitate the triangular relations of the Holy See, China and Taiwan. The diplomacy of Ma's administration has created a Bridge across the Strait and facilitated the exchanges for both sides on different levels: political, economic, cultural as well as on the religious freedom level. With the so-called flexible diplomacy, Ma Ying-jeou wants to make Taiwan a responsible stakeholder 「負責任的利害關係者」, and a peace maker 與「和平締造者」 in the international community.

In 2008, Larry Wang, ROC Ambassador to the Holy See, presented his Letters of Credence to Pope Benedict XVI and recalled that for more than fifty years, relations between the Chinese people on either side of the Taiwan Strait have been characterized by controversy and animosity. However, he told the Pontiff that the new administration of President Ma has expressed its goodwill to Mainland China and launched a new era of cross-Strait relations by resuming dialogue and consultations with Beijing. He added that the Ma's administration is not excluding the possibility of entering into consultations with Mainland China over a cross-Strait peace accord. Ambassador Wang said:

I firmly believe that the reconciliation of relations with Mainland China will bring a more stable and peaceful environment not only for Asia, but also for the world as a whole. This new course of action corresponds to Your

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<sup>229</sup>Wang, K. (2011, February). *op. cit.*, p. 2

Holiness' idea of urging everyone to build a Peaceful World Family.<sup>230</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI was very pleased and praised President Ma for his work to decrease tensions across the Taiwan Strait. He stated:

Frank and constructive dialogue is also the key to the resolution of the conflicts that threaten the stability of our world. In this regard, the Holy See welcomes the recent positive developments in relations between Taiwan and Mainland China. Indeed the Catholic Church is eager to promote peaceful solutions to disputes of whatever kind, “giving attention and encouragement to even the faintest sign of dialogue or desire for reconciliation”. In this way, she wishes to support the efforts of Governments to become “staunch champions of human dignity and courageous builders of peace.”<sup>231</sup>

On December 1, 2011, President Ma met His Eminence Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of Congregation for Catholic Education in Holy See, and he recalled that 30 years ago when he served as former President Chiang Ching-kuo's interpreter, one of his most important jobs was to prepare the response to the Pope's annual prayer for world peace that is delivered on January 1. Consequently, the Pope's longstanding commitment to world peace has made a deep impression on him. That is why, since he took office in May 2008, he has sought to forge peace between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Efforts in this regard have already yielded initial results, and rays of peace have emerged in the Taiwan Strait. President Ma also stated that the Holy Father's calls over the years for world peace demonstrate that peace is a universal value, and the Holy Father's efforts have won him worldwide

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<sup>230</sup>Wang, L. (2008, November 12). The New Amassador of China greets Pope Benedict XVI. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 7.

<sup>231</sup>BenedictXVI. (2008, November 12). Holy See welcomes positive developments in relations between Taiwan and Mainland China. *L'Osservatore Romano*, p. 7.

respect and praise.<sup>232</sup>

#### 4.5. Conclusion

The Holy See has this particular mission to be at the service of humankind. It cannot abandon the ones who are oppressed and the most in need since it is the essence of its vocation. In 1951, against his own will, the Internuncio was expelled from China. However, the Holy See has never ceased to send messages and initiate contacts with the PRC because of its concern not only for the Chinese Catholics but also for all the men and women in China. In 2005, Cardinal Tauran said that:

The Vatican is a different kind of political entity from other countries. It's a leader of a worldwide religion and therefore its main concern is expanding religious freedom around the world.<sup>233</sup>

Diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the ROC are stable and friendly. However, the Pope has been confronted by a condition of the PRC which has asked for the ending of diplomatic ties between the Vatican and Taiwan in order to move forward in their relationship. Beijing considers that the Vatican must treat Taiwan as an inseparable part of China. It is a real dilemma for the Holy See because it has no real reason to leave Taiwan especially when this diplomatic partner is sharing the same ideals of religious freedom, world peace and human rights. Moreover, in its history, the Vatican has never withdrawn any of its Nunciature.

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<sup>232</sup>Office of the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). (2011, December 1). *President Ma meets His Eminence Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of Congregation for Catholic Education in Holy See*. Retrieved February 12, 2012, from <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=26038&rmid=2355>

<sup>233</sup>Chang, Y.-p. (2005, November 24). MOFA urges the Vatican to be fair. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved October 21, 2011, from <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/11/24/2003281473>

The Vatican would seem to have little to lose if diplomatic relations were re-established with China. The little it might lose - severance of diplomatic ties with Taiwan and a subsequent heavy blow to the believers there - could loom large if, in the eyes of the world, the Vatican is seen to be sacrificing its moral principles for the sake of political gain. The Vatican could, of course, justify the possible diplomatic shift of emphasis away from Taiwan towards the Mainland for the greater good of the universal Church, while, at the same time, such a shift would not diminish pastoral care for the faithful in Taiwan. The principle gain for the People's Republic of China, if relations are re-established, is the further isolation of Taiwan from the world community in the wake of a possible Taiwan-Vatican diplomatic break. China would be anticipating that this might help force Taiwan to the negotiating table for talks on reunification. Taiwan's ambassador to the Holy See possesses diplomatic status in Rome through an established concordat between the Holy See and the Italian Government to the effect that all ambassadors to the Holy See enjoy diplomatic privileges in Italy. It is an asset much valued by the Taipei government. The ambassador takes full advantage of his position to improve his government's relations with other European countries.<sup>234</sup>

Nowadays, the tensions between Taiwan and the Mainland seem to be diffused due to better cooperation. This will certainly help the Holy See to find a way to have ties with both Chinese governments. Indeed, while having good ties with Taiwan, the Pope wants to open the door to the many Catholics who live in China. It is also important to underline that the relations between the Vatican and China depend more on matters concerning religious freedom on the Mainland than on the issue of

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<sup>234</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December), *op. cit.*, p. 825.

Vatican City's diplomatic relations with the ROC.<sup>235</sup>



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<sup>235</sup>Lu, M. (1999, March 26). Holy See urged to respect ties. *Taiwan Today*. Retrieved december 11, 2011, from <http://taiwantoday.tw/ct.asp?xItem=17034&CtNode=103>



## 5. The Holy See and the Efforts of Rapprochement with China under the Pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI

### 5.1. Introduction

The death of Pope John Paul II underlines the gulf that still exists between the Roman Catholic Church and the People's Republic of China, two of the world's largest and most important bodies. It was the ardent desire of the late pontiff to visit China during his lifetime, but he was denied even the chance to visit Hong Kong during an Asian tour in 1999. At the time, Beijing pointed out that the Vatican still maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan, underscoring the fact that, though the Pope is viewed by most as a religious leader, Beijing sees him – as it sees the Dalai Lama – as a political figure.<sup>236</sup> Pope John Paul II truly desired to establish ties with China and showed during his long pontificate many signs of goodwill of the Holy See toward China. On the other side, the PRC has always reminded the Vatican its two pre-conditions in order to improve the bilateral relations. First, the Vatican must sever diplomatic relations with Taiwan; it should recognize the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government representing all of China, with Taiwan being an undisputable part of China. Second, the Vatican must not interfere with the internal affairs of China in the name of religion. The People's Republic of China alone among the nations of the world did not send any Delegate to attend the funeral services of Pope John Paul II. Even the Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Liu Jianchao's words of condolence for the Pope's death indicated little sorrow, followed by the same decades-old two pre-conditions.<sup>237</sup> The Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association sent condolences as well, but no Catholics from China

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<sup>236</sup>Ching, F. (2005). Sino-Vatican relations after the death of Jean-Paul II. *China Brief*, 5(8). Retrieved October 15, 2011, from

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=3844](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=3844)

<sup>237</sup>Criveller, G. (2005, Summer). John Paul II and China. *Tripod*, XXV(137), p. 30.

were allowed go to the funeral. The official messages sent by Beijing were repeated in the media. There was little to justify the optimistic analysis expressed, for example, by experts writing from Rome and Beijing, who interpreted the moves from Beijing as encouraging and as a breakthrough.<sup>238</sup>

## **5.2. Pope Benedict XVI and his Attempts to Dialogue with China**

### *5.2.1. The Beginning of a New Phase*

With John Paul II's death and the election of Benedict XVI, the Chinese have started to send positive signs to the Holy See. Indeed, for the first time ever, the PRC government sent a message to congratulate the Pope at the occasion of his election. Chinese authorities showed interest in resuming diplomatic relations with the Vatican. With the election of Benedict the XVI, many hopes and expectations have been raised about the normalizations of Sino-Vatican relations. For the Chinese Communists, this election was the beginning of a new phase. Indeed, they did not trust the former Pope, John Paul II, who played an essential role in the downfall of European communism. In the encyclical *Centesimus Annus (1991)*, Pope John Paul II invited the whole world to hail the collapse of Communism and the coming of a new age. The rejoicing of the Catholic Church over the collapse of Communism in Europe formed a sharp contrast to the anxiety of the Chinese leaders vis-à-vis the international adversary resulting from the Tiananmen incident as well as the collapse of Communism in Europe and in the Soviet Union.<sup>239</sup> China considered John Paul II as a threat to communism and partly responsible for its collapse in Europe. After watching the influence of Pope John Paul II over Solidarity activists in the Gdansk

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<sup>238</sup>Charbonnier, J., & Politi, G. (2006). China-Vatican Relations: 1978-2005. In *The Catholic Church in China: today and tomorrow*. Leuven, Belgium: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, p. 132.

<sup>239</sup>Leung, B. (2005). Sino-Vatican Relations at the Century's Turn. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 14(43), p. 357.

(Poland) shipyards, Deng Xiaoping warned about the dangers of the “Polish disease” spreading to China.<sup>240</sup> Under these circumstances, a favorable response to Vatican overtures in the 1990s could hardly be expected.<sup>241</sup> The Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference sent a joint message of congratulations to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany on his election as the 265th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. In this congratulatory message, was written:

It is our earnest hope that you would enhance the Sino-Vatican relations for the sake of the salvific work of Jesus Christ.<sup>242</sup>

On this occasion, Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang, while recalling the so-called two preconditions, said that:

We hope that under the leadership of the new Pope, the Vatican can create favorable conditions for the improvement of China-Vatican relations.<sup>243</sup>

The transition between the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI also marked both highs and lows. For example, in 2005, several bishops were ordained and approved by both the CCPA and the Vatican. Pope Benedict XVI even officially received a group of 28 CCPA bishops and seminary administrators to Rome in August 2005. This environment soured, however, in 2006, with the Chinese appointment of three bishops without Vatican consent (in Kunming, Anhui, and

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<sup>240</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). The Red Flag and the Ring: the dances surrounding the Vatican ties. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 1(3), p. 498

<sup>241</sup>Leung, B. (1998, March). The Sino-Vatican Negotiations: Old Problems in a New Context. *The China Quarterly*, 153, p. 133.

<sup>242</sup>ChinaDailyagencies. (2005, April 20). China congratulates Ratzinger as new Pope. *China Daily*. Retrieved February 17, 2012, from [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-04/20/content\\_435912.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-04/20/content_435912.htm)

<sup>243</sup>XinhuaNewsAgency. (2005, April 21). China congratulates New Pope. *China.org.cn*. Retrieved February 17, 2012, from [http://www.china.org.cn/archive/2005-04/21/content\\_1126468.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/archive/2005-04/21/content_1126468.htm)

Suzhou), which generated a swift and fierce response from the Vatican, including the reminder that under canon law, bishops who are ordained illicitly, as well as those who take part in any related ceremonies, could face potential excommunication from the Church.<sup>244</sup>

### 5.2.2. Cardinal Zen and the Vatican's New Policy on China

To show his goodwill to establish dialogue with China, Pope Benedict XVI decided to create Cardinal the Bishop Joseph Zen of Hong on 24 March 2006. Most Reverend Zen's appointment as cardinal was welcomed by Chinese Catholics as a great sign of hope. Msgr Wei Jingyi, unofficial Chinese bishop of Qiqihar said:

I think the Pope appointed Bishop Zen precisely because he is Chinese. It is a perfect decision, just and intelligent. This appointment expresses the fact that, for the Pope, the Chinese nation and the Chinese Church have an important place in his heart.<sup>245</sup>

Bishop Zen is well known for his advocacy of religious freedom and democracy but also for his good mastery of Theology and the social teachings of the Church. He is definitely a firm defender of Catholic principles and values. As a matter of fact, following the appointment of Bishop Joseph Zen, as cardinal, the Chinese foreign ministry made known its position on the issue. It warned the head of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong not to meddle in politics. At a news briefing in Beijing, foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said that the Chinese government had noted the appointment and believed the Catholic Church had all along advocated

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<sup>244</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September), *op. cit.*, p. 495.

<sup>245</sup>AsiaNews.it. (2006, February 22). Card. Zen a great help for unity, development of Chinese Church, says underground bishop. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved February 15, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Card.-Zen-a-great-help-for-unity,-development-of-Chinese-Church,-says-underground-bishop-5461.html>

that religious figures should not interfere in politics. In fact, Bishop Zen had frequently been critical of Beijing in the past. On the other hand, Bishop Zen said he saw his appointment as an indication of a very special fondness for the Chinese people. He hoped his appointment could help end the 55-year dispute between the Vatican and China.<sup>246</sup> Cardinal Giovanni Lajolo, former Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See, said that: “In making the bishop of Hong Kong a cardinal, the Pope trusts that this gesture will be understood correctly and, in a certain way, reciprocated.” He added: “In our opinion, the time is ripe”; the Chinese authorities “cannot ignore the expectations of their own people, nor the signs of the times”.<sup>247</sup> These two comments of Cardinal Lajolo show that the Vatican is willing to start a real dialogue with China but also that it has a clear message addressed to China about freedom and democracy. Pope Benedict XVI wanted to make a gesture toward China as an invitation to initiate ties. Although the Holy Father sent these signs of friendship and overtures, three bishops of the CCPA were ordained in 2006 without any mandate of the Pope. These events terribly damaged the path of possible dialogue and diplomatic relations.

### 5.2.3. *A Vatican “Private” Top Level Meeting on China in January 2007*

Despite these ordinations, Pope Benedict XVI was not discouraged and summoned a meeting in January 2007. The meeting, chaired by Cardinal Bertone, Secretary of State, took place at the Vatican on January 19th and 20th. There were 20 people, including Cardinal Joseph Zen and Cardinal Paul Shan, emeritus bishop

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<sup>246</sup>CatholicNewsAgency. (2006, February 23). Chinese Official warns newly appointed Cardinal, Bishop Zen, not to interfere into politics. *Catholic News Agency*. Retrieved February 17, 2012, from [http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/chinese\\_official\\_warns\\_newly\\_appointed\\_cardinal\\_bishop\\_zen\\_not\\_to\\_interfere\\_into\\_politics/](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/chinese_official_warns_newly_appointed_cardinal_bishop_zen_not_to_interfere_into_politics/)

<sup>247</sup>Magister, S. (2006, March 3). *The Vatican’s New Policy on China Has a Color: Cardinal Red*. Retrieved February 15, 2012, from [www.chiesa.espressoonline.it](http://www.chiesa.espressoonline.it): <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/47284?eng=y>

of Kaohsiung, Taiwan, as well as other Chinese prelates from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Several Vatican officials were also involved: Cardinal Ivan Dias, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples; Cardinal William Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; and Cardinal Julian Herranz Casado, President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts as well as Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli<sup>248</sup>, Secretary of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See. By gathering so many eminent personalities and specialists about China, Pope Benedict XVI wanted to map out a wide-ranging strategy to assist the Church in China in the future and to deepen the understanding of the situation of the Catholic Church in Mainland China.<sup>249</sup> China is definitely a major concern for the Holy Father and is at the center of his religious geopolitics. The press release related issued after the meeting expressed the will of the Holy See to continue on the journey of a respectful and constructive dialogue with the Chinese governing authorities in order to overcome past difficulties, emerged. Moreover, the hope was expressed that a normalization of relations on all levels would come to pass in order to allow a peaceful and fruitful life of faith in the Church and to work together for the good of the people of China and peace in the world.<sup>250</sup> This communiqué also announced that Pope Benedict XVI will address a letter to the Catholics in China. The letter is expected to reaffirm fundamental principles concerning the divine constitution of the Church as well as religious liberty, and state clearly what constitutes the hierarchical structure of the Church founded by

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<sup>248</sup> Archbishop Celli, who went as the Pope's envoy to Beijing in 2006, is regarded as the most experienced Vatican official on the China question.

<sup>249</sup> O'Connell, G. (2007, January 31). Vatican Vista. *UCAN News*. Retrieved February 25, 2012, from <http://www.usccb.net/Church-updates/Vatican%20Vista31Jan07.pdf>

<sup>250</sup> AsiaNews.it. (2007, January 20). The Pope prepares a letter to China's Catholics. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved February 15, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=8287>

Christ, including the fundamental role of the Pope in appointing bishops.<sup>251</sup>

### 5.3. Pope Benedict XVI's Letter to Chinese Catholics

#### 5.3.1. *An Appeal for Cooperation at the Service of Humankind*

State and Church serve the people on two different levels: the State as a political power, the Church as a religious body contributing a spiritual force to the believers and encouraging them to act as good citizens. There is no conflict between the two powers. On the contrary, there is an appeal for cooperation in the service of the same human beings.<sup>252</sup> The *Letter of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China*<sup>253</sup> so long expected, was finally published on June 30, 2007. The Letter, dated May 27<sup>th</sup> on the Feast of Pentecost, is divided into two parts: "the situation of the Church, theological aspects" and "guidelines for pastoral life" - and a conclusion. The letter was posted on the Vatican's Web site in several languages: Chinese, French, English and Italian and had been sent earlier to Chinese authorities as a courtesy.

In the very first part of this letter, the Holy Father praised China and underlined "the splendor of its ancient civilization, with all its experience of wisdom, philosophy, art and science". Moreover, he noted the achievements of China and its goals of socio-economic progress that attracts the interest of the entire world. For the

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<sup>251</sup>O'Connell, G. (2007, January 31). Vatican Vista. *UCAN News*. Retrieved February 25, 2012, from <http://www.usccb.net/Church-updates/Vatican%20Vista31Jan07.pdf>

<sup>252</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007, Autumn). Pope Benedict opens a bright horizon to Catholics in China. *Tripod*, XXVII(146), p. 44.

<sup>253</sup>BenedictXVI. (May 27, 2007). *Letter of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priest, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China*. Retrieved November 12, 2010, from [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/letters/2007/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_let\\_20070527\\_china\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070527_china_en.html)

Church, human beings are the center of concern. Indeed, Pope Benedict XVI recalled that the mission of the Church is to promote and defend the human dignity. He proposed to China to cooperate with the Church in this mission of defense of world peace, human dignity and justice. Pope Benedict XVI stated:

As my venerable predecessor Pope John Paul II once said, "The Catholic Church for her part regards with respect this impressive thrust and far-sighted planning, and with discretion offers her own contribution in the promotion and defense of the human person, and of the person's values, spirituality and transcendent vocation. The Church has very much at heart the values and objectives which are of primary importance also to modern China: solidarity, peace, social justice, the wise management of phenomenon of globalization.

With its values and moral principles, as well as with its spirituality, the Church can bring to China another stone to the wisdom that China has inherited along its long history. Both can benefit from each other and offer the best to the so-called global world for the service of man. Together, they can play a great role in the service of peace that is the supreme good for all men. The presence of the Church in China can be considered as positive since it has only the sublime ideal to be in solidarity with each human being. The service of the Church in China will not only enrich the great and wise Chinese values and philosophy but also refine spirituality. In this letter, Pope Benedict XVI shows how much he wants to reconcile with China. There is no sign or no call for confrontation. He only wants to initiate a dialogue for mutual understanding. This letter, different from previous Papal letters which condemned communism and the socialist system, is a message of love for the Chinese Catholics and for the whole Chinese people.



### 5.3.2. *An Appeal for a Unified Chinese Catholic Church*

Leaders in Rome have long insisted that there is only one Roman Catholic Church in China, albeit divided into different communities. Yet representatives on the ground are often caught in a virtual tug of war between dueling instructions and mixed messages. One unregistered bishop lamented, “The Holy See wants us to reconcile but does not tell us how to proceed or give us any clear instructions”.<sup>254</sup> In his 2007 letter to the Church in China, Pope Benedict XVI established new guidelines to favor cooperation between clandestine Catholic communities and those officially registered with the government. The Papal letter strongly criticized the limits placed by the Chinese government on the Church's activities. But on several key issues, including the appointment of bishops, it invited civil authorities to a fresh and serious dialogue.<sup>255</sup> Pope Benedict attempted to strike a balance between setting the stage for future dialogue and speaking to the fractures within the Chinese Catholic community. He worked to distinguish the Church's aspirations from political goals, denying any specific political agenda and encouraging Catholics to be mindful of their need to be good citizens. The Papal letter to Chinese Catholics states, “The Catholic Church which is in China, does not have a mission to change the structure or administration of the State; rather, her mission is to proclaim Christ to men and women” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2007, sec. 4, para. 7). Pope Benedict reminded that Christ “did not wish to be a political Messiah,” but instead he “bore witness to the truth but refused to use force to impose it on those who spoke out against it” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2007, sec. 7, para. 2). Within this text, the Pope spoke of the few bishops named without Vatican approval who have as yet failed to

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<sup>254</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September), *op. cit.*, p. 496.

<sup>255</sup>Thavis, J. (2007, June 30). Papal letter to Chinese Catholics seeks to unite divided communities. *Catholic News Service*. Retrieved from <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0703773.htm>

seek such justification. He stated, “although not in communion with the Pope, they exercise their ministry validly in the administration of the sacraments, even if they do so illegitimately” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2007, sec. 8, para. 12). By permitting Communion between unregistered Catholics and priests affiliated with the CCPA, Pope Benedict addressed one of the greatest areas of dispute between some Chinese Catholics: whether individuals could, in right conscience, receive sacraments from individuals affiliated with the CCPA. At the same time as he issued this significant olive branch, he also requested that all bishops of the Church be in “visible and concrete communion with the Pope” (Pope Benedict XVI, 2007, sec. 5, para. 4)—a call to those who proclaim loyalty to Rome while subscribing to the independence of the Chinese Catholic Church as required by the CCPA. Throughout the letter, Pope Benedict called for a unified Chinese Catholic Church grounded in reconciliation even while recognizing the intense pain regarding the divisions that exist between some Catholic communities in the country.<sup>256</sup> Indeed, the letter contained important directives aimed at bridging the gap between Catholic communities that have registered with the Chinese authorities -- and therefore operate under certain official limits -- and Catholic communities that have practiced the faith in a more clandestine fashion, professing full loyalty to the Pope.<sup>257</sup> In this letter, Pope Benedict XVI clearly appeals for unity and reconciliation between the clandestine Church and the official Church recognized by the Chinese government.

### 5.3.3. *An Appeal for Religious Freedom: the Appointment of Bishops in China*

In this letter, Pope Benedict XVI also addressed the thorny question of the selection and ordination of bishops. Disputing Chinese government arguments, he

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<sup>256</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September), *op. cit.*, p. 498-499

<sup>257</sup>Thavis, J. (2007, June 30), *op. cit.*

said that when a Pope names bishops, it is an exercise of his “supreme spiritual authority” and not a political act. It is also a question of basic religious liberty.<sup>258</sup> Moreover, in order to uphold the “unrenounceable principles” of separation between State and Church and protect the Catholic doctrine, Benedict XVI stated that the CCPA is unacceptable. With its attempts at independence and autonomy, self-management and democratic administration of the Church the CCPA runs the risk of distorting the life of the catholic communion itself. Thus spiritual, not political needs have led Benedict XVI to condemn the activities of the CCPA and demand freedom in matters of appointments. The letter is clearly a spiritual message and for this reason will have a greater impact on China than any political row.<sup>259</sup> Appointments of bishops by the Holy Father are an exclusive right of the Church and essential to religious freedom. However, China wants to have this right to name bishops. This condition of the Chinese government is totally unacceptable by the Holy See. Nevertheless, Pope Benedict XVI admits there is a possible way to find an accord on the procedure of appointment of bishops since recognizing bishops has also civil effects. Pope Benedict XVI said that “The Holy See would like to be completely free to appoint bishops”. He invited Chinese authorities to reach an agreement with the Church in order to resolve the situation, in which some bishops continue to be selected and ordained without Papal approval. The Holy Father outlined three situations:

(1) Some bishops, eager to maintain loyalty to the Pope, have chosen to be ordained clandestinely, without government approval. The Pope said that because the “clandestine condition” is not a normal feature of the Church's life, the Vatican

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<sup>258</sup>Thavis, J. (2007, June 30), *op.cit.*

<sup>259</sup>Cervellera, B. (2007, June 30). Pope's letter: for truth and love of the Church and China. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved February 17, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=9694>

hopes these bishops will be recognized by the government.

(2) Other bishops have been ordained without Papal approval, but have later sought and obtained communion with the Pope, who has granted it. Unfortunately, the Pope said, in most cases the priests and faithful of the diocese have not been informed of the bishop's reconciliation with the Vatican, giving rise to serious problems of conscience. For this reason, the Pope wrote in his letter “that it is indispensable, for the spiritual good of the diocesan communities concerned, that legitimization, once it has occurred, is brought into the public domain at the earliest opportunity, and that the legitimized bishops provide unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the successor of Peter”.

(3) Finally, there are a small number of bishops who were ordained without Papal approval and have not asked for reconciliation. The Pope encouraged them to re-enter the communion of the Church and noted that they exercised their ministry validly, if illegitimately.<sup>260</sup> The Catholic Bishops' College in China recognizes the illegitimate bishops but doesn't welcome some bishops who are in communion with the Pope. Because of this very issue, the Pope stated that this episcopal college cannot be recognized as a *Bishops' Conference* by the Vatican.

## **5.4. The Aftermath of Pope Benedict XVI's Letter to the Church in China**

### *5.4.1. Reactions of the Chinese Government*

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has tried many attempts to improve the dialogue between the Vatican and China. In his 2007 letter, he exhorted the Chinese Catholics to remain true to their faith. With this letter, the Holy Father also

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<sup>260</sup>Thavis, J. (2007, June 30), *op.cit.*

attempted to ease governmental concerns by instructing Catholics to strive to be good citizens. Although, as a token of courtesy, the Holy See provided the Chinese government with a copy of the letter ten days before its publication, China's official reaction to the letter was still critical, although somewhat restrained. The Foreign Affairs Ministry in Beijing ignored the call of the Pope for dialogue and even warned the Holy See not to create new obstacles. In a brief message, the Chinese Foreign Ministry just said that Beijing is willing to continue a dialogue with the Vatican, but reminded the Pope of the two pre-conditions: the non-interference in China's internal affairs and the severance of diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

The Chinese government was embarrassed and unhappy about the Pope's letter to Chinese Catholics. In fact, the Chinese government's reaction to the Pope's letter was very negative. Cardinal Zen in a recent interview, on the day following the praying day for China, on May 25, 2012, said that "Beijing did not want the Holy See to insinuate the idea that the Chinese Church is persecuted by civil authorities". But he has no regrets about the letter, which he said was "totally new and unique" and "a very eloquent sign" of how much Benedict XVI cares for the Church in China — an issue on which he is informed in great detail. For now, Cardinal Zen believes it is important to hope and work for reconciliation between the underground community and "their brothers who are now still under the slavery of the patriotic association." He added that "Humanly speaking, we see no intention of the government willing to recognize religious freedom".<sup>261</sup> In fact, when dealing with sensitive issues, Chinese leaders prefer not to speak in the first person, or to react too quickly. They let their middle-level officials speak and take action. Therefore the

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<sup>261</sup>Pentin, E. (2012, May 25). A day of prayer for China. *Newsmax*. Retrieved May 25, 2012, from <http://www.newsmax.com/EdwardPentin/Prayer-China-Catholics-Pope/2012/05/25/id/440331>

United Front Work Department of the Communist Party, even before the letter was published, summoned some official bishops to Huairou, near Beijing, to instruct them about the letter. Ye Xiaowen, director of the Council's State Administration for Religious Affairs, was also there, reasserting the State's policies. Another key government official, Mr. Liu Bainian, Secretary of the Patriotic Association, said that his organization would not distribute the letter. That means no one will take responsibility for this, since religious publications need government authorization. Certainly the heavy suppression of the letter all over China, while not unexpected, does not presage a good reaction from the government<sup>262</sup>. Moreover, Ye Xiaowen supposedly addressed the participants and told them that “we have served you with *maotai*, the best liquor in China. After drinking it, you no longer need foreign wine,” which is one way of reasserting the plan to set up an independent Chinese Catholic Church, something that the Pope cannot countenance since it is contrary to Catholic doctrine.<sup>263</sup>

Today, almost five years after this letter, there is no noticeable change in China's religious policy or any positive effects but rather more complications. In fact, the Chinese government has not accepted the Papal letter and considered it as not realistic. The CCPA has still continued to name bishops according to its needs without any approval of the Holy Father despite his 2007 letter and his will of reconciliation.

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<sup>262</sup>Criveller, G. (2007, Autumn). Reactions to the letter of Pope Benedict XVI to the Chinese Church. *Tripod*, XXVII(146), pp. 51-57.

<sup>263</sup>AsiaNews.it. (2007, July 2). Subdued but predictable reactions in China to Pope's letter. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=9709>

#### 5.4.2. Reactions of the Holy See

In light of Pope Benedict XVI's recent letter to Catholics in China, Vice-Chairman of the CCPA Liu Bainian created a big surprise when he declared that he hoped to see the Pope visit and celebrate Mass in Beijing during an interview published on July 24 in the Italian daily *La Repubblica*. He said that he wanted to use the interview as an opportunity to send the Pope his organization's prayers and an invitation to visit. "[We want to] Let him know that we pray for him always and may the Lord give us the grace to welcome him here among us." Then, he added: "I strongly hope to be able to see the Pope one day here in Beijing to celebrate Mass for us Chinese". After such an invitation, Pope Benedict, who was reached while leaving a meeting with local clergy in Northern Italy replied, "I can't speak at this time... It's a bit complicated" according to ANSA news agency. The Holy Father has chosen not to comment because of the complexity of the issue.<sup>264</sup> However, the following, Liu Bainian, denied the invitation, insisting again that hopes are impossible until diplomatic ties are normalized, which means that the Vatican cut ties with Taiwan and stay out of Chinese religious affairs.<sup>265</sup> The Holy Father, surely because he was well aware of his interlocutor, was extremely prudent and did not rejoice too quickly. Cardinal Bertone commented on this invitation and said that it was not done formally by the Chinese authorities. The invitation was made by an individual, in his personal capacity, and not in the name of the Chinese

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<sup>264</sup>CatholicNewsAgency. (2007, July 24). Chinese official invites Pope Benedict to visit China. *Catholic News Agency*. Retrieved February 23, 2012, from

[http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/chinese\\_official\\_invites\\_Pope\\_benedict\\_to\\_visit\\_china/](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/chinese_official_invites_Pope_benedict_to_visit_china/)

<sup>265</sup>AsiaNews.it. (2007, July 26). Liu Bainian goes back on his invitation to Pope, and the government talks of "changing times". *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved February 25, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=9931&size=A>

government.<sup>266</sup> Therefore, the invitation or the revocation of this invitation should not cause any reaction or be seen as an offense since it was not done by official channels but simply by one person during a press conference.

The reservation of the Chinese authorities and the terse message from the Chinese Foreign Ministry recalling the two preconditions was judged in the Vatican as “a positive reality”.<sup>267</sup> Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, had underlined the lack of government response, hypothesizing a “moment of thought and reflection”.<sup>268</sup> It is supposed that there is a difference in viewpoints, in China, between the highest political authorities – who are aiming at greater “harmony” with the Church – and the apparatus of the communist party, which is more hostile.<sup>269</sup> It seems that the Holy See wanted to be extremely patient but also prudent toward the Chinese authorities. It didn’t want to hurry China perhaps for fear of irritating it. In fact, the Vatican diplomats, who are very skilled, didn’t want to show any regrets or any sign of irritation to the Chinese silence. By keeping an optimistic attitude, they surely wanted to facilitate the dialogue and cleverly lead the Chinese authorities toward possible negotiations.

In the meantime, the first new bishop elected in China according to official procedures, after the publication of the Pope’s letter, is that of Beijing. And the person pre-selected was such that in the Vatican the news of the appointment was taken not as an affront, but as a relief. This new bishop-elect was Joseph Li Shan, of

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<sup>266</sup>CatholicOnline. (2007, August 19). Cardinal Bertone's Meeting With the Press. *Catholic Online*. Retrieved February 27, 2012, from

<http://www.catholic.org/featured/headline.php?ID=4701&wf=rsscol>

<sup>267</sup>Magister, S. (2007, July 23). *The Pope Writes, but the Beijing Authorities don't respond*. Retrieved February 27, 2012, from [www.chiesaexpressonline.it](http://www.chiesaexpressonline.it):

<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/157081?eng=y>

<sup>268</sup>AsiaNews.it. (2007, July 26), *op. cit.*

<sup>269</sup>Magister, S. (2007, July 23), *op. cit.*



Beijing, from a strongly Catholic family, a favorite of the faithful who had him as a pastor in the commercial neighborhood of Wangfujin: entirely the opposite of his predecessor, Michael Fu Tieshan, an adherent of the communist regime who has never reconciled with the Pope. Cardinal Bertone described the new bishop-elect as “a very good and suitable person.” And he added: “The election took place according to the canons of the official Church, and now we are waiting for the bishop-elect to ask for the approval of the Holy See. We are optimists”.<sup>270</sup> The attitude of the Holy See is exceptional and shows how much the Pope wants to reconcile with China. A few months after the publication of the Pope’s letter, in a press conference during his visit to the annual convention of the Knights of Columbus, in Nashville, Tennessee, Cardinal Bertone said that the areas that the Pope dealt with in that letter and the manner in which he dealt with them were the best possible way that the Holy See could address the situation in China, probably much more than many of the articles read in the newspapers. By that, he certainly wanted to say that there is no need to add any other comment to the Pope’s letter as it is very clear and explains the entire point of view of the Holy See. He added that the letter of the Pope to the Chinese Catholics is a historical moment and constitutes a watershed between the past and the future in the relationship between China and the Catholic Church. Therefore, the only best thing to do is not to add more words to the letter but to wait for an official reply of the Chinese authorities. The “Wait and See” attitude of the Holy See was well noticed when he said:

The question of a visit has been suspended for the time being, and we are waiting for some kind of move on the part of the Chinese government. At this time we are at a moment of reflection.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>271</sup> Catholic Online.(2007, August 19), *op. cit.*

## **5.5. Conclusion**

Pope Benedict XVI, since his election, has shown to China his clear goodwill to initiate a frank and fruitful dialogue with China for a better understanding. With the elevation of Bishop Zen of Hong Kong to cardinal, the establishment of the Commission on the Church in China and his letter to the Chinese Catholics, the Holy Father tried to find a way to reach the Chinese authorities and prove to them that the Church will cooperate for the greatest benefit of the Mainland Chinese. However, China has not really replied positively to the signs and messages of the Pontiff. The fact that China has constantly ignored the appeals of the Church shows in a way that there is a fear of conflict of authority. China definitely doesn't share the same doctrine with the Church and is certainly not willing to confront its convictions to those completely opposite to that of the Catholic teaching. Since 1951, the Holy See has not been able to normalize its diplomatic relations with Mainland China who always recalls its two pre-conditions. It seems that the shifting of the Nunciature from Taipei to Beijing won't happen in a foreseeable future. However, in order to assert and confirm this statement it is necessary to understand the religion policy of the PRC and its practice.

## 6. Difficulties in Normalizing Sino-Vatican Relations

### 6.1. Introduction

All religions present world views that contradict the Marxist-Leninist ideology of dialectic materialism. Relations between Church and state have historically ranged from relatively mild tensions, found in western democracies, to fundamental conflicts over authority, found in authoritarian, especially communist states. With Mao Zedong's emphasis on class struggle and his intolerant approach to ideological issues, China's religious idealism including Catholicism had to give way to the communist thought. Mao proclaimed the PRC in 1949 and in 1951 Sino-Vatican relations were formally broken with the expulsion of the Internuncio, Archbishop Antonio Riberi. The Bolshevik nature of the Chinese Communist Party germinated the conflict when institutional control was instrumental to promoting the interests of the Party. In Maoist, China, the prevalence of Marxism-Leninism and Maoist thought allowed no room for deviating ideas, including religion.<sup>272</sup> Only after Deng Xiaoping initiated the modernization policy in 1978, and China began to emerge from its isolation, was there a possibility for dialogue, with the view of establishing a Sino-Vatican Concordat.<sup>273</sup> However, until now relations between the Holy See and the PRC are still at a stalemate. The Holy See's goals in negotiating for the normalization of its diplomatic relations with China are to enhance the development of the Chinese Catholic Church and to be able to serve all men and women on the Mainland. However, the religious policy of China, and, more specifically the issue of the appointment of bishops, make the process of normalization of diplomatic

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<sup>272</sup>Leung, B. (2005, May). Sino-Vatican Relations at the Century's Turn. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 14(43), p. 355.

<sup>273</sup>Leung, Beatrice, Chinese book.....sino-vatican relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century, p. 321-322

relations, more difficult. Moreover, the Chinese authorities have been constantly asking the Vatican to break its ties with China and to consider Beijing as the sole legitimate government of the PRC and Taiwan as part of it. China seems to dictate the rule of this negotiation but the Holy See, based on its principles of religious freedom and human dignity, cannot accept all the conditions that the PRC has tried to impose.

## **6.2. The Religious Policy of the PRC and its Practice**

### *6.2.1. The Maoist Ideology vis-à-vis Religion*

The Chinese Communist Party's attitude to religion rests on ideological foundations. In concurrence with the aims of Marxist-Leninism/Maoism, the CCP seeks the eradication of religion as its overall goal.<sup>274</sup> On October 1, 1949, Ma Zedong, having defeated his Nationalist fellow citizens, proclaimed the inauguration of the People's Republic of China. From that day, the Communists applied the Marxist doctrine in China and its negative outlook toward religion. Karl Marx said that:

Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.<sup>275</sup>

The doctrine of Karl Marx is fundamentally atheist. He considers religion as the most evident expression of humanity's alienation when it is subjected to economic exploitation. For him, religion is the illusory dream of suffering humanity

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<sup>274</sup>Leung, B. (2001). Communist Party-Vatican interplay over the training of Church leaders in China. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 40(4), p.658.

<sup>275</sup>Marx, K. *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Cambridge University Press, 1970. Ed. Joseph O'Malley

and an instrument of domination for those who exploit their fellow human beings. He thought that it distracts human beings from their real task in the world and consequently has a paralyzing and narcotic effect. When Mao first began to lead the Chinese people to the so-called socialist utopia, no ideological rival could have any legitimacy. In this early period, religious freedom was simply part of a policy to destroy religion and pave the way for universal acceptance of socialist orthodoxies.<sup>276</sup> In the first constitution of the PRC, promulgated on September 20, 1954, freedom to believe or not to believe was affirmed. Indeed the constitution of the PRC mentioned that its citizens can enjoy freedom of religious belief. However religious freedom only existed insofar as believers did not promote counterrevolutionary activities. Then, the Chinese Communist government also founded the Office for Religious Affairs in order to control religions at the different levels of administration: national, provincial and local. The different offices regulated religious activities according to the directives of the United Front, the Communist Party's organ of propaganda. Inspired by the doctrine of Karl Marx, Chinese Communists rejected religion and considered it as an outdated superstition left over from the previous society. They were guided by one of the thoughts of Mao Zedong:

The idols were set up by the set up by the peasants, and in time they will pull them down with their own hands, there is no need for anybody else prematurely to pull down the idols for them.<sup>277</sup>

In 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the monopoly of his own brand of Marxism-Leninism. Social reforms were launched to eliminate imperialism,

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<sup>276</sup>Leung, B. (2005, December). China's religious freedom policy: the art of managing religious activity. *The China Quarterly*, 184, p. 894

<sup>277</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007). *Christians in China*. San Francisco, USA: Ignatius Press, p. 425-427

feudalism and bureaucratism and to prepare for the growth of a political regime of democratic centralism. Apart from the ideological incompatibility of atheist Marxism-Leninism and religion, Chinese leaders believed religion to be closely linked to both “foreign cultural imperialism” (Christianity) and “feudalism” (Buddhism and Taoism). This belief set the tone for religion-state relations and reinforced basic ideological conflict.<sup>278</sup> Article 5 of the Common Programme as laid down by the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in 1949, stated that the people of the PRC are entitled to enjoy freedom thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, change of domicile and demonstrations.<sup>279</sup> Then, in order to administer religious affairs in the PRC, the Communist leaders created the Office of Religious Affairs Bureau and the Party's United Front Work Department. Since the 1950s, the PRC has named five major religions as acceptable for its citizens: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism, and Catholicism, even though CCP members are barred from formal religious affiliations. The officially recognized associations are afforded legal existence and even support from the government, by way of CCP-sanctioned “patriotic” associations, buildings, seminaries, and publishing outlets. Yet limits are enforced. Especially problematic, in the view of Beijing, is the combination of religion and activism, including separatism (Muslims in Xinjiang, Buddhists in Tibet) and revolutionary activism (Catholics in Eastern Europe).<sup>280</sup> Nevertheless, there exists an ideological stalemate between the CCP and a variety of world religions. In fact, Beijing perceives that religion has been employed by international subversive forces to westernize and divide China. The CCP also believes that by planting

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<sup>278</sup>Leung, B. (2005, December). *op. cit.*, p. 895.

<sup>279</sup>Leung, B. (1992). *Sino-Vatican Relations: Problems in Conflicting Authority, 1976-1986*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, p 84.

<sup>280</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). The Red Flag and the Ring: the dances surrounding the Vatican ties. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 1(3), p. 493.

religious questions, dark foreign forces have been trying to attain the political goal of pluralizing China as a means of subversion.<sup>281</sup>

### 6.2.2. *The Maoist ideology and Catholicism*

With Maoist fears of imperialism many foreign priests were expelled. For the Chinese Communists, Christians had been closely linked to Westerners and had been the instruments of imperialist transgression; all their links outside China were therefore severed. Catholics were especially suspect due to their connections with the European Pope. Thus, between 1951 and 1955 all foreign missionaries were expelled from China. Christians were forced to demand expulsion of the missionaries, so as to give proof of their anti-imperialist convictions.<sup>282</sup> The religious freedom policy (to believe or not believe) was launched in 1950 to deal with religious matters and ideological conflict in the context of current policies. For example, the expulsion of foreign missionaries in the 1950s was part of the state's anti-American imperialism policy.<sup>283</sup> At the same time, the CCP launched the so-called Three Autonomies Movement (self-government, self-support and self-propagation) in order to establish national Churches independent from the West but firmly under its control. This was clearly meant to sever the Chinese Church's ties with the Vatican and to pursue the PRC's ideological stance on self-sufficiency. In 1957 the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CCPA) was established, staffed with cadres from the Religious Affairs Bureau. This organization is not a Church in and of itself; rather, it is an arm of the Party, ensuring that Catholic groups follow certain formalities and procedures. The main organizational aim is to sever Catholic allegiance to Rome; to this effect the CCPA has appointed many Bishops of its own

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<sup>281</sup>Leung, B. (2005, May).*op. cit.*, p. 365.

<sup>282</sup>Charbonnier, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, pp. 425-427.

<sup>283</sup>Leung, B. (2005, December).*op. cit.*, p. 898.

accord ignoring Roman Catholic Canon Law which states that Bishops must be appointed by the Holy See. This shows a clear attempt by the CCP to avoid external influence.<sup>284</sup> The Chinese government required congregants and priests alike to register and declare their allegiance to the CCPA, individuals refusing to submit to this authority continued to practice their faith outside of official channels, subjecting themselves to great risk, including fines, disappearances, imprisonment, and even torture. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), religious believers, both registered and unregistered, were brutally targeted, all Churches were shuttered, and nearly all foreign connections were severed.<sup>285</sup> All evidence shows that the Red Guards were the worst enemies of religion. These hundreds of thousands of revolutionary teenagers were often hooligans in western terms. Not only did the non-CCPA Catholics have a difficult time, but even CCPA Catholics were purged. The CCPA was disbanded and its last meeting was held in 1962, after which there were no more meetings until 1980. At the peak of their frenzy in August 1966, the Red Guards desecrated Catholic Churches together with other places of worship; and they destroyed religious articles and literature. They set out to destroy the “Four Old Practices” (old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits of exploiting classes) in order, as they claimed, that new practices could be established. Religion, being part of the old world, was mercilessly purged, and religious activities were ordered to come to an end.<sup>286</sup>

### 6.2.3. *Deng Xiaoping's Open Door policy and its Effects on Religion*

The Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP in December 1978 is

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<sup>284</sup>Leung, B. (2001).*op. cit.*, p. 658.

<sup>285</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September).*op. cit.*, p. 492.

<sup>286</sup>Leung, B. (1992). *Sino-Vatican Relations: Problems in Conflicting Authority, 1976-1986*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, p. 99.



generally regarded as a watershed in the history of China, this being the occasion when Deng Xiaoping established his ascendancy and the party launched the policies of reform and the Open Door. Great changes have taken place in Chinese social life since then. The economic reforms which are transforming China, coupled with a limited degree of relaxation in ideology, have provided room for the revival of religious activities in China.<sup>287</sup> In fact, the atmosphere of liberalism under the open-door policy of Deng Xiaoping required a softening in the control of religion in order to encourage national reconstruction and foreign investment.<sup>288</sup> Deng Xiaoping thought that a better treatment of religious adherents would indirectly persuade anxious intellectuals and professionals to believe that his modernization was a long term-policy. It was therefore hoped that they would devote themselves to the national reconstruction. The official summary of the CCP's policy on religion issued in 1982 as "Document 19" stated the basic policy as one of respect for and protection of the freedom of religious belief, this pending such future time when religion itself will would disappear. While recognizing that religious belief was a private matter, and acknowledging that coercion to prevent religious belief would be counterproductive, the Party policy nevertheless permitted the freedom not to believe in religion. The Party was also committed to providing propaganda to support atheism, and to using its control over the educational system to marginalize religious belief. Document 19 prohibited grants of feudal privileges to religious organizations and otherwise limited their capacity to recruit, proselytize and raise funds. Education of clergy and administration of religious organizations and buildings aimed to ensure that religious leaders remained loyal to principles of Party leadership, socialism, and national and ethnic unity. Document 19 also prohibited

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<sup>287</sup> Leung, B. (1992).*op. cit.*, p. 894

<sup>288</sup> Leung, B. (2005, December).*op. cit.*, p. 894

Party members from believing in or participating in religion.<sup>289</sup> With the policies of “reform and opening”, Beijing began to loosen controls on many aspects of associational life, including religious expression. Even in the absence of formal diplomatic recognition, and in the face of rather severe limitations on unregistered associations, there are significant signs of Catholic Christian life that cross the “official” and “underground” distinctions, including the restoration of Churches, seminaries, and convents, as well as the opening of large centers for social concern and medical services that are run by vowed religious.<sup>290</sup> The revival and proliferation of religious activity that ensued coincided with an ideological crisis within the Party and country at large that alarmed Party leaders. Anxieties were further heightened by the June 4th Tiananmen incident and the collapse of communist states in the West. The confluence of these factors triggered a tightening of ideological control and important changes in religious policy.<sup>291</sup> As a result, the CCP Central Committee/State Council delivered a new document called “Document No. 6” in 1991. This document emphasized increased regulatory control over all religious activities: implementing administration of religious affairs is aimed at bringing religious activities within the bounds of law, regulation, and policy, but not to interfere with normal religious activities or the internal affairs of religious organizations. While the reference to non-interference seemed benign, the qualification that this extended only to normal activities suggested an overarching purpose to confine religion to the limits of law and policy.<sup>292</sup> The Tiananmen incident, the formation of a Chinese Underground Bishop’s Conference in 1989 or the emergence of the Falun Gong in 1997 alarmed the Chinese authorities who

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<sup>289</sup>Pitman, B. P. (2003, June). Belief in Control: Regulation of Religion in China. *The China Quarterly*, 174, p. 320.

<sup>290</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). *op. cit.*, p. 492.

<sup>291</sup>Leung, B. (2005, December). *op. cit.*, pp. 894-895.

<sup>292</sup> Pitman, B. P. (2003, June), *op. cit.*, p. 320.

desired to tighten the control over this phenomenon of proliferation of religion. Leaders within China are seeking ways to more efficiently manage spiritual activities, which by all accounts are increasing, by developing requirements for operating without threat of imprisonment or harm. The State Administration for Religious Affairs issued regulations in 2005 requiring the registration of all “religious bodies,” an amorphous concept that was left undefined in the official language. Practically speaking, authorities have required both individuals and places to be on public record in order to operate in the open. In many locales, clergy are being required to receive a “priest license” in order to work openly without interference. Registrants are often required to concelebrate Mass with a government-designated open Church bishop. Reports indicate that individuals have been prevented from pastoral work or forced to leave if they proceed without a license. In response, the Vatican has communicated its support of this licensure (for members of the unregistered community) if a consensus of local priests agree that it would be helpful in order to avoid persecution. The practicality of finding this consensus has been difficult, though, because of the nature of the unregistered Church and the difficulty of assembly.<sup>293</sup>

However, these 2005 regulations show that religious practice is not encouraged by the Chinese authorities and severe restrictions remain in place despite a greater tolerance of religion. It is clear that religion is considered as dangerous to national security and social order. It is written in the article 3 of these regulations on religious affairs:

Religious organizations, religious venues and religious believers ought to

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<sup>293</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September).*op. cit.*, p. 493.

obey the Constitution, laws, rules and regulations, and support the unity of the country, ethnic unity and the stability of society. No organization or individual should use religion to engage in activities which destroy social order, harm the bodily health of citizens, interfere in the State educational system, or harm the national interest, the public welfare of society or the lawful rights of citizens.<sup>294</sup>

In addition, the article 4 stipulates:

Each religion must adhere to the principle of the independent running of their religion. Religious organizations, religious venues and religious affairs are not subject to foreign domination.<sup>295</sup>

In fact, much of the recent policy rhetoric in China is addressed to the international arena to give an impression that religious freedom prevails. China tried to show openness when applying at the World Trade Organization or before the Olympic Games in 2008. However, religion is still subject to the strict control of the Chinese government.

### **6.3. The challenge of the PRC to the Holy See: the Two Pre-Conditions**

The two pre-conditions necessary to improve China-Vatican relations: the Vatican must break relations with Taiwan; the Holy See should not interfere in China's internal affairs, not even in terms of religion.

#### *6.3.1. First Pre-condition: Relations with Taiwan*

After Deng Xiaoping initiated the policy of openness as a component of his modernization program, the Vatican saw the opportunity to try and begin a dialogue

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<sup>294</sup>Barry, P. (2005, Spring). Regulations on Religious Affairs. *Tripod*, XXV(136), p 6.

<sup>295</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 7.

in order to establish a Sino-Vatican concordat. The first overture was made in 1981 by Cardinal Casaroli, the Secretary of State of the Vatican. The Chinese responded by stating that negotiations would not be possible as long as the Vatican maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan.<sup>296</sup> This first condition is consistently at the top of China's foreign policy agenda, and the prospect of a Vatican on this issue would be a large incentive at least for further talks. Indeed, China's main concern in engaging in rapprochement with the Vatican is to isolate Taiwan. The severing of Taiwan-Vatican diplomatic relations would be a natural outcome of establishing Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations. By isolating Taiwan, Beijing hopes to force the government of the ROC to the negotiating table and move towards the reunification of Taiwan and China on Beijing's terms. Actually, the Taiwan issue is not the real problem in the process of the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations. Indeed, the Holy See addressed the PRC many times and made clear that it wanted to solve the question of Taiwan as long as it is done in a proper way. It is also important to recall that the Internuncio Antonio Riberi wanted to stay in China, but he was expelled by the Communists. The Holy See didn't want to move its Nunciature but in 1951 China did not allow it. Moreover, in order to show his goodwill for dialogue with China, Pope Paul VI downgraded the title of the Head of the Apostolic Nunciature to the more humble grade of chargé d'affaires. In a letter to the Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping, in November 1983, Pope John Paul II wrote:

Taiwan is undoubtedly a long and complicated situation in which the Holy See has found itself, through a series of events, not always dependent on its own will. Nevertheless, I am confident that in the context of concrete

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<sup>296</sup> Leung, B. (1998, March). The Sino-Vatican Negotiations: Old Problems in a New Context. *The China Quarterly*, 153, p. 128

examination of the question, it will be possible to reach a positive solution.<sup>297</sup>

Cardinal Sodano in 1999 or Cardinal Zen in 2005 clearly expressed that the Holy See is willing to move its Apostolic Nunciature to Beijing if the Chinese authorities will permit it. The interest on the part of Vatican diplomats is witnessed by the now famous February 11, 1999 remarks of Cardinal Angelo Sodano who said that the Holy See was ready to transfer its Nunciature from Taipei to Beijing “not tomorrow, but this very night, if Chinese authorities were to permit it.” And he added: “The Taipei Nunciature is already the Chinese Nunciature. First it was in Beijing, then in Nanking, where the Nuncio was repressed and constrained to transfer to Hong Kong and then to Taiwan. Moving it back to Beijing won’t be a breaking of relations with Taiwan but a returning of the Nunciature to its initial location.” This was a few weeks after President Jiang Zemin was to have visited Italy. Cardinal Sodano’s remarks were therefore a sign of openness and expressed a desire for diplomatic relations.<sup>298</sup> The Vatican has unceasingly sent messages to China and told of its desire to fix this problem in an appropriate way. It is certain that the Holy See won’t abandon Taiwan for the sole purpose of political gain. The Holy Father is a spiritual leader and he cares about each human being. That is why, Archbishop Migliore, the then permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, once said that:

The Vatican is hoping that a formula can be found to maintain ties with Taiwan while opening diplomatic relations with China. We are ready to go

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<sup>297</sup>John Paul III. (1983). Letter to Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping. In E. Wurth, & B. Maheu (Ed.), *Papal Documents Related to China (1979-2005)* (pp. 202-203). Hong-Kong, China: Holy Spirit Study Center.

<sup>298</sup>Magister, S. (2003, September 9). *China and the Vatican: The Points of Disagreement*. Retrieved September 15, 2011, from [www.chiesa.expressonline.it](http://www.chiesa.expressonline.it): <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/6974?eng=y>

back to Beijing without abandoning Taiwan.<sup>299</sup>

The recognition of the Republic of China in Taiwan was never a stumbling block to Chinese diplomacy. Chinese leaders like Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai warmly received Richard Nixon in 1972, when the United States had full diplomatic relations with Taiwan, not to mention US military assistance and collaboration. Similarly, recently China accepted South Korea's (1992) and South Africa's (1998) switch of diplomatic relationships from Taipei to Beijing, after the conclusion of intense negotiations, not as a pre-condition. Demanding the break of diplomatic relations as a pre-condition is unfair on the part of Beijing, and in fact, is a diplomatic blunder. The Holy See is a special entity, vested only with moral authority, not a state among others. The diplomatic activity of the Holy See only functions for peace and for the pastoral mission of the Church. The pastoral mission of the Church comes before any diplomatic success. The mission of the Pope is religious. This is why the Church cannot thus far accept the diplomatic pre-conditions imposed by Beijing. For the Church, diplomacy is simply a tool to promote its legitimate freedom and rights. When the Chinese government is ready to grant the Church those long-awaited rights, the diplomatic dispute will be over.<sup>300</sup>

### 6.3.2. *Second Pre-condition: Nominations of Bishops*

The election of bishops constitutes a major source of contention between the Holy See and China. The Pope refuses to sanction any bishops named independently by Chinese or any other civil authorities. In the Canon law it is stipulated that “Can.

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<sup>299</sup>Puet, T. (2007, March 13). Vatican diplomat expresses hope for normalizing relations with China. *CatholicNewsService*. Retrieved November 4, 2011, from <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0701419.htm>

<sup>300</sup>Criveller, G. (2005, April 21). The smoke screen of China's preconditions for relations with the Holy See. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved October 24, 2011, from <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/The-smoke-screen-of-China's-preconditions-for-relations-with-the-Holy-See-3108.html>

377 §1: The Supreme Pontiff freely appoints bishops or confirms those legitimately elected".<sup>301</sup> In China, the self-consecration of bishops did not come about abruptly. For the first two such consecrations, both in 1958, prior approval of the Vatican had been sought after the two candidates were said to have been locally elected. The Vatican refused to grant permission because the election was in contravention of Church laws which reserved the right of appointment of bishops solely to the Pope, and also because the Vatican had not received sufficient information about the suitability of the proposed candidates or about the election process which gave rise to the candidature. Under these circumstances the Papal authority was unwilling to accept the unilateral decision of the Chinese Church. Pope Pius XII, through the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, threatened the consecrated as well as the consecrators with excommunication, the most severe form of Church punishment. The consecrations went ahead, with the Chinese Church condemning the pontiff for high-handedness. Subsequently, the Chinese have omitted to seek the Pope's approval for further consecrations of bishops.<sup>302</sup> For Beijing authorities, the connection between religion and outside control is a major concern especially because of the unique authority Catholics assign to the papacy in Rome. PRC leaders are, in general, leery of supranational organizations having direct influence within China, but especially of religious institutions.<sup>303</sup> Article 36 of the 1982 PRC Constitution specifically prohibits religious organizations and affairs from being directed by foreign powers:

Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to

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<sup>301</sup>Catholic Church. (1983). *Code of Canon Law, Latin - English*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Can. 377§1.

<sup>302</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 819

<sup>303</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). *op. cit.*, p. 498.



believe in, or not to believe in, any religion: nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in any religion. The state protects normal religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state. Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination.<sup>304</sup>

The consecration of Bishops is an issue of influence and control which proves to be a thorn in the side of Sino-Vatican relations. The Vatican insists that bishops must be approved by Rome, yet Beijing resents the interference and has previously ordained several bishops without approval from the Holy See. The issue is one of leverage: who commands the most. It seems both sides have reached a stalemate. Should diplomatic ties be forged, the issue of those ordained without Papal approval would remain. A sub-class of clergy could emerge creating a schism within the Catholic community. Furthermore, Canon Law states that those consecrated without Papal approval (as well as the consecrators) ought to be excommunicated, a stance that would need to be clarified by the Holy See for diplomatic ties to be formed. Along with concerns over religious persecution, the Vatican views the CCPA as seeking independence from Rome, as an arm of the Party and not a Church in and of itself, because the political nature of the organization is clear. Nevertheless, there remains scope for cooperation. Pope Benedict XVI claimed that CCPA bishops were validly ordained but illegitimate and called for a unified Catholic Church in China.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>304</sup>*Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, 4 December 1982, Article 36.

<sup>305</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*. Working Papers, Current Issues in Religion and Politics, University of St. Andrews, the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics (CSRP), Scotland, UK. Retrieved February 10, 2012, from <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/CIRPIII%2011120042.pdf>, p. 22.

## 6.4. Prospects on Negotiations: Gains, Risks and Losses

### 6.4.1. Potential Compromises on the Taiwan Issue

PRC wants to isolate Taiwan and uses this pre-condition with the Vatican to establish diplomatic ties. If a diplomatic settlement is indeed reached, the outcome will lead to even further isolation for Taiwan, since the Holy See is the only European power to recognize the Taiwanese government. As a way to prevent the potential upheaval, the Beijing diplomatic corps is in the midst of trying to establish normal relations with heavily Catholic countries in Central America that currently maintain diplomatic loyalties with Taiwan.<sup>306</sup> Indeed, as part of its charm-offensive Beijing is attempting to establish solid sets of relationships with many Catholic countries in Central America. Not only would relations with the Vatican ease this process but Beijing may persuade many of them to switch diplomatic recognition away from Taipei to Beijing.<sup>307</sup> For Beijing, distancing Taiwan from its only source of European recognition would be a substantial benefit for fostering Sino-Vatican relations, strengthening the “One-China” policy and increasing domestic support. It is a zero-sum game. The Vatican would also see advantages, principally access and (limited) control of the number of Catholics in China.<sup>308</sup> The Vatican is concerned for its faithful wherever they are in the world but also for the whole human race and aims to protect their rights, freedom and well-being. This is one of the principle reasons why the Holy See wants to establish ties with China. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican’s Secretary for the Relations with the States at that time, explained in an interview with the China Times of Taipei on June 3, 1999: “For the Holy See, the first aim of diplomatic relations, with China as with other countries, is that of fostering the life of the Church and of promoting peace in the international

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<sup>306</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September).*op. cit.*, p. 500.

<sup>307</sup>Smith, H. (2011).*op. cit.*, p. 23

<sup>308</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20

context through dialogue”.<sup>309</sup> Yet, as some have warned, the Holy See will lose if it is perceived to be sacrificing moral principles (by ending its ties with Taiwan) for the sake of political gain<sup>310</sup>. What are the implications for the Church of Taiwan that has been faithful and has supported the papacy throughout these long years? Would the Holy See seem to ignore the fidelity of Catholics and Church leaders in Taiwan and appear to abandon them diplomatically?<sup>311</sup>

The Vatican has a very special international status, since it is both a sovereign state and a transnational organization. From the state perspective Beijing has laid down the precondition that any country wishing to establish diplomatic relations with China must sever official ties with Taiwan first.<sup>312</sup> From the transnational organization perspective there are also ways in which international organizations can maintain relations with both Beijing and Taipei without arousing too much resentment from Beijing. Examples can be found in the International Olympic Committee (IOC), an international non-governmental organization, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) an inter-governmental organization. The methods devised by these two transnational organizations to resolve the “two-China” problem have become known as the “Olympic formula” and the “ADB formula”. These formulas, devised in 1979 and 1986 respectively, have since been applied by many other international organizations, especially non-governmental ones, and have been

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<sup>309</sup>Tai, R. (2002). The Vatican's Dilemma: Taipei and/or Beijing? In *A Collection of Documents on the History of the 60 Years of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations*. Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University, p. 610

<sup>310</sup>Luehrmann, L. (2009, July/September). The Red Flag and the Ring: the dances surrounding the Vatican ties. *Asian Politics & Policy*, 1(3), p. 500

<sup>311</sup>Maheu, B. A. (2005, November 7). The Catholic Church in China. *America Press News*, 193(14), p.14

<sup>312</sup>Examples of countries falling into this category include the United States, Japan and others. However, both the United States and Japan find alternative ways of maintaining trade and commercial links with Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. It may therefore be possible for the Vatican to follow such examples by establishing diplomatic and religious relations with Beijing while severing diplomatic ties but maintaining religious links with Taiwan.

found to work satisfactorily. In the “Olympic formula” both the Chinese Olympic committee and the Taiwanese Olympic committee are members of the IOC enjoying the same rights and status, although the Chinese team is recognized under the name “China” whereas the Taiwanese team is recognized under the name “Chinese Taipei”.<sup>313</sup>

Msgr Russell, current chargé d'affaires, a.i. of the Holy See in Taipei, in an interview with Radio Taiwan International on March 25, 2010, said: “Diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Republic of China-Taiwan are stable”. Indeed, from a previous chapter, we have underlined the great cooperation between Taiwan and the Holy See. These past years have been particularly fruitful between the two states and their ties have been consolidated with significant events and agreements. Dr. Tou Chou-seng, former ROC ambassador to the Holy See, once said:

When I entered the Foreign Service 30 years ago, my first job was to track affairs in Europe, including the Vatican. I remember people telling me, ‘Look out, something is about to happen, the Vatican is going to move its embassy to Beijing’. It is thirty years later, and we’re still waiting. I don’t believe this is going to happen anytime soon.<sup>314</sup>

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy See’s former foreign minister, stated that if the Vatican does eventually move its embassy, it will leave behind some diplomatic representation in Taipei. On this statement, Dr. Tou said: “That way, at least the people of Taiwan will not feel like they’re being sacrificed”.<sup>315</sup> If China normalizes its relations with the Holy See, Beijing authorities could incur potentially significant risks to their hegemony by engaging in formal diplomatic ties. With a

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<sup>313</sup>Chan, G. (1989, December). *op. cit.*, p. 819

<sup>314</sup>Allen, J. (2005, November 25), *op. cit.*

<sup>315</sup>*Ibid.*

permanent Papal representative in Beijing, who would be required under Canon Law 364<sup>316</sup> to send information to the Vatican about the status of the Chinese Church, authorities may struggle to find ways to check the flow of information.<sup>317</sup> It is unclear as to whether or not Beijing will be willing to sacrifice this element of sovereignty for other political gain. Similarly, the size (and potential authority) of a united Church in China could prove to be a challenging force to the CCP's authority. Not only would potential exist for clashes between the CCP and the Catholic Church but also for the Church to act as a mechanism through which voices of dissent could be aired - the destabilizing potential is evident.<sup>318</sup>

#### 6.4.2. *Religious Freedom and Appointments of Bishops*

Due to cultural and political encroachment by imperialists in the past, China, on grounds of nationalism and patriotism, has reiterated that the Catholic Church should be independent of any foreign control, a Chinese Church self-governing and self-administrating; and it has not allowed the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church, the Pope, and the administrative body of the Church, the Vatican, to have any relations whatsoever with the Chinese Catholics. In other words if the Chinese

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<sup>316</sup> Code of Canon Law (1983), Can. 364 The principal task of a Papal Legate is continually to make more firm and effective the bonds of unity which exist between the Holy See and the particular Churches. Within the territory assigned to him, it is therefore the responsibility of a Legate: 1° to inform the Apostolic See about the conditions in which the particular Churches find themselves, as well as about all matters which affect the life of the Church and the good of souls; 2° to assist the Bishops by action and advice, while leaving intact the exercise of their lawful power; 3° to foster close relations with the Episcopal Conference, offering it every assistance; 4° in connection with the appointment of Bishops, to send or propose names of candidates to the Apostolic See, as well as to prepare the informative process about those who may be promoted, in accordance with the norms issued by the Apostolic See; 5° to take pains to promote whatever may contribute to peace, progress and the united efforts of peoples; 6° to work with the Bishops to foster appropriate exchanges between the Catholic Church and other Churches or ecclesial communities, and indeed with non-Christian religions; 7° to work with the Bishops to safeguard, so far as the rulers of the State are concerned, those things which relate to the mission of the Church and of the Apostolic See; 8° to exercise the faculties and carry out the other instructions which are given to him by the Apostolic See.

<sup>317</sup> Luehrmann, L. Ibid. p. 501

<sup>318</sup> Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*, p. 24-25

Catholic Church, with the backing of the Chinese government, has full autonomy, only the Chinese government can exercise authority over the Church. By arranging this, Beijing intends to negate completely the very special feature of the Catholic Church of having communion with its highest spiritual leader.<sup>319</sup>

China strongly requests to have the authority over the appointments of bishops. But as previously mentioned, the first paragraph of the Can. 377 stipulates that it is the privilege of the Holy Father to select and appoint a bishop. In addition, paragraph 5 of the same canon stipulates:

Can. 377, §5. No rights and privileges of election, nomination, presentation, or designation of bishops are granted to civil authorities.

It is therefore clear that the appointment of bishops' issue is non-negotiable and that this power of the Pope cannot be relegated to another authority. The appointment of bishops, who are pastors of the ecclesial community, belongs to the Holy Father. The Holy See can certainly express its hope that the bishops elected would receive the consensus of the local Churches, and even of the local civil authorities. But this must absolutely not come to the point of limiting the Pope's prerogatives, or of granting negotiation or veto rights over candidates. It seems very difficult that the Vatican will concede to China this authority on appointing bishops. However, if a possible negotiation on these nominations is found, other problems will appear. Indeed, in case of diplomatic recognition, both China and the Church will have to face the position of the Catholic leaders within the CCPA. Where will they stand with Rome? This will also include the reconciliation of excommunications and clarification as to

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<sup>319</sup>Leung, B. (1992). *op. cit.*, p. 265.

whether past policies toward formal Church separation remain in force.<sup>320</sup> There are precedents which both the Vatican and the Chinese government can draw on to break the present deadlock and improve Sino –Vatican relations. In fact, in an interview with Catholic News in 2007, Archbishop Migliore pointed out the situation in Vietnam where, several years ago, a similar disagreement was resolved, with the Vatican agreeing to consult with the government over the appointment of bishops but still having the final say. Other examples can be found: some regions in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria each have the ability to nominate hopeful candidates, who then receive the approval of the Holy See. In Paraguay, Peru, Haiti, Monaco, and the French diocese of Alsace and Lorraine<sup>321</sup>, the governments each similarly nominate bishops for Papal approval as well. In the case of France and the Alsace-Lorraine region, the government nominates the Bishop. This privilege has been granted to France since Napoleon by the so-called “Concordat of 1801”. This Concordat was an agreement between Napoleon and Pope Pius VII, signed on July 15, 1801. It solidified the Roman Catholic Church as the majority Church of France and brought back most of its civil status. While the Concordat restored some ties to the papacy, it was largely in favor of the state; the balance of Church-State relations had tilted firmly in Napoleon's favor. The main terms of the Concordat of 1801 between France and Pope Pius VII included:

1/ A declaration that “Catholicism was the religion of the great majority of the French” but not the official state religion, thus maintaining religious freedom, in particular with respect to Protestants.

2/ The Papacy had the right to depose bishops, but this made little difference,

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<sup>320</sup>Luehrman, L. (2009, July/ September), *op. cit.*, p. 498.

<sup>321</sup>The Concordat of 1801 was an agreement between Napoleon and Pope Pius VII, signed on 15 July 1801. It solidified the Roman Catholic Church as the majority Church of France and brought back most of its civil status. While the Concordat restored some ties to the papacy, it was largely in favor of the state; the balance of Church-state relations had tilted firmly in Napoleon's favour.

because the French government still nominated them.

3/ The State would pay clerical salaries and the clergy swore an oath of allegiance to the State.

4/ The Roman Catholic Church gave up all its claims to Church lands that were confiscated after 1790.

5/ The Sabbath was reestablished as a "festival", effective Easter Sunday, 18 April 1802. The rest of the French Republican Calendar, which had been abolished, was not replaced by the traditional Gregorian calendar until 1 January 1806.

By the law of 1905 on the separation of Church and State, the Concordat was abrogated in France. However, some terms of the Concordat are still in effect in the Alsace-Lorraine region under the local law of Alsace-Moselle, as the region was controlled by the Holy Roman Empire at the time of the law's passage. Therefore, under this Concordat, the French government still has the right to nominate Bishops and the clergy is still paid by the State.

In Vietnam, where in recent years there has been great progress in promoting bilateral relations with the Vatican, the recent arrangement has been that Hanoi nominates three candidates from which the Pope chooses one. What will happen to the unregistered Church if diplomatic relations indeed develops? Is it possible to bring together the government-sanctioned Churches with unregistered ones? Will participants in the formerly registered Churches be welcomed with Christian charity by those who used to condemn them in the so-called underground movement? While there has been more crossover than conflict within these communities, some divisions and outspoken groups have also soured relations within some Church communities. For many of these questions, the move toward reconciliation



and recognition are not without detractors. Some may see the Vatican's overtures toward Beijing as acceptance of a schismatic Church and may consider this path as an insult to those who have suffered persecution because of their committed loyalty to the Holy See.<sup>322</sup> Some Catholics believe the worsening persecution is due to signals of dialogue between the Chinese government and the Vatican, which are being increasingly hindered by the Patriotic Association. Even others caution that diplomatic relations will provide few solutions to the dilemmas faced by Catholic Christians in China. As Maryknoll Sister Betty Ann Maheu observed, "Diplomatic relations would be helpful, but they constitute only one element in the overall well-being of the Church in China".<sup>323</sup>

## 6.5. Conclusion

The Church exists for the sake of evangelization, and the only thing it asks is freedom. Diplomatic relations take their meaning in the context of the evangelizing mission of the Church, which is not a political entity among others, and does not seek diplomatic affirmation. Diplomacy does not of itself bring to the Church the freedom to carry out fully its mission. Excessive faith in diplomatic results risks not only being a real illusion, but also bringing undue manipulation of the Church's priorities. For the good of evangelization, it must remain clear that the Church's mission is spiritual. The Holy See established its Nunciature in Taipei in 1951. The Vatican has been present in Taiwan for 61 years. During this long period of time, many ties of trust, cooperation and friendship were created. Indeed, the Internuncioidid not plan to come to Taipei but tried to stay at his post in Mainland

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<sup>322</sup>Luehrman, L. (2009, July/ September), *op. cit.*, p. 503.

<sup>323</sup>Maheu, B. A. (2005, November 7). The Catholic Church in China. *America Press News*, 193(14), p. 8.

China. However, after such a long time among the Taiwanese, it isn't fair to abandon Taiwan. It is right that the Holy See has this sublime mission of proclaiming the Gospel in all the corners of the World and especially in China where many Catholics are not yet free to believe and practice their faith. Why treat Taiwan as a "historical remnant," as a sort of traffic accident to be shaken off? Of course, Taiwan is small, and China is big: but is this argument really valid? In Taiwan, the Church is free and at peace. There is an air of freedom and pluralism on this island.

The second pre-condition of China on the appointment of Bishops cannot be acceptable for the Vatican according to its Canon law. A constructive dialogue has to be established in order to find a possible solution that respects the authority of the Holy Father but also won't irritate China. Pope Benedict XVI does really care about China and his great desire is to find a solution to this stalemate. Despite the difficulties and because of his love for the Chinese, the Holy Father hasn't given up and continues to think of possible ways to reach China. Since he became Pope Benedict XVI in 2005, the Pontiff has always shown that he cares for China. He elevated to the Cardinalate, Bishop Zen in 2006, he wrote a letter addressing Chinese Catholics in 2007, and he established the Commission on the Church in China in late 2007. Even though illicit ordinations took place recently in China, the Pope was not discouraged because of his concern for the freedom of Catholics on the Mainland. In order to have a better understanding of China, Pope Benedict XVI has ordained Archbishop Savio Hon, a native of Hong Kong, and appointed him as secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. In addition, the Holy Father appointed Archbishop Fernando Filoni, an expert in Chinese affairs and on the Middle East, as prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, on 10 May 2011; he was made cardinal at the consistory of February 18, 2012.

Numerous are the difficulties but great is the desire of the Holy See normalize the relations with China. However, this has to be done in a proper way and according to the principle, the moral and beliefs of the Church.



## 7. Scenarios on Sino-Vatican Relations

### 7.1. Introduction

The issue of Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations is far from easy to solve. Time and constructive dialogue will certainly help for a better mutual understanding. The Soviet Union / Russia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam had, in the past, difficulties in their ties with the Holy See. However, Russia has recently created full diplomatic relations with the Vatican and Vietnam has accepted a Papal non-resident envoy. These two cases may serve as models to think about a possible way to normalize the relations between the Vatican and China. In his address on January 11, 2010 to the members of the diplomatic Corps, Pope Benedict XVI said:

I formulate the hope that the Successor of Peter keeps his door open to everyone in the hope of maintaining relations which can contribute to the progress of the human family. It is a reason for deep satisfaction that, just a few weeks ago, full diplomatic relations were established between the Holy See and the Russian Federation. The recent visit of the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was likewise very significant; Vietnam is a country close to my heart, where the Church is celebrating her centuries-long presence with a Jubilee Year. In this spirit of openness, throughout 2009 I met many political leaders from all over the world; I also visited some of them and would like to continue to do so, insofar as is possible.<sup>324</sup>

### 7.2. The Model of Russia-Vatican Relations

#### 7.2.1. *Perestroika and Glasnost*

During the Cold War, the Holy See and the Kremlin went through decades of spiritual and philosophical conflict. The Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who

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<sup>324</sup>BenedictXVI. (2010, January 11). *Address of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps for the Traditional Exchange of New Year Greetings*. Retrieved March 14, 2012, from [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va): [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2010/january/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20100111\\_diplomatic-corps\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2010/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100111_diplomatic-corps_en.html)

came to power in 1985, inaugurated a new era by promoting perestroika<sup>325</sup> for the restructure of his country's political and economic system and by leading his major policy reform: the so-called glasnost<sup>326</sup>, meaning "openness". With Gorbachev, hostility with the Vatican came to an end when he came to Rome for a historic meeting<sup>327</sup> with Pope John Paul II in December 1989. The Soviet leader wanted to offer to the Soviet Union another orientation for a bright future by adopting new policies both on the domestic level as well as on the international level. This became reality when in March 1990, the Soviet Union and the Vatican established official diplomatic relations at the level of permanent missions; this was a year before the collapse of the Communist regime. The Holy See wanted Gorbachev to restore religious freedom to the Soviet Catholics. The Ukrainian Catholic Church was driven underground by Stalin in 1946. It was forcibly dissolved, and its parishes were closed or merged into the Russian Orthodox Church. Centered in the western Ukraine, the Ukrainian Catholics follow the Eastern liturgy but profess allegiance to the Pope. Gorbachev promises the Pope new law on religious freedom. The Pope has insisted repeatedly that the Ukrainian Catholic Church be made legal again; and he got an important start toward that goal when Gorbachev promised him that a new law guaranteeing freedom of conscience would soon be enacted. In turn, the Soviet leader won something he had come for: legitimacy from the leader of the world's 900 million Roman Catholics. It came in the form of a Papal blessing for his plans to restructure Soviet political and economic life. John Paul said the Holy See "wishes you success and declares itself ready to support every initiative that will better

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<sup>325</sup> "Perestroika" (meaning restructuring or reconstruction) refers to the series of political, economic, and social reforms and foreign policy changes undertaken by the Soviet Communist Party in the years 1985 to 1991.

<sup>326</sup> Glasnost (meaning openness) was a policy which called for increased openness and transparency in government institutions and activities in the Soviet Union.

<sup>327</sup> This was only the second time a leader of Russia had met with a Pope, the first being the meeting between Tsar Nicholas I and Pope Gregory XVI in 1845.

protect and integrate the rights and duties of individuals and peoples".<sup>328</sup> During his second meeting with the pontiff in November 1990, Gorbachev told him about new Soviet religious freedom legislation, which was followed by the reestablishment of Roman Catholic structures in Russia. Boris Yeltsin accepted the tradition to intensify contacts with the Vatican in the midst of political changes and met John Paul II twice in the pontiff's personal Apostolic Library,; the first time was on December 19, 1991, only a few days after the Belavezha Accords<sup>329</sup> were signed. The leader of the new Russia proclaimed his post-Soviet reforming strategy before the spiritual leader of countless Christians.<sup>330</sup> Then, in January 1992 the Vatican recognized Russia as the U.S.S.R.'s legal successor and also established relations at the level of mission.

### 7.2.2. *The Vatican and the Russian Orthodox Church*

The new detente follows decades of mistrust between the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches under the officially atheist USSR. With an agreement to begin official relations and a pledge of expanded religious freedom for Soviet citizens, President Mikhail S. Gorbachev joined hands today with Pope John Paul II. Indeed, since the early 1990s, the Catholic Church was able to normally function in Russia. But the lifting of restrictions on religion led to new tensions with the Orthodox Church, which accused the Vatican of poaching for souls in traditional Orthodox territory. The Vatican denied this charge. The standoff prevented John Paul II from fulfilling his wish to make a pilgrimage to Russia. Indeed, the step forward

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<sup>328</sup>Haberman, C. (1989, December 2). The Kremlin and the Vatican; Gorbachev Visits Pope at Vatican; Ties Are Forged. *The New York times*. Retrieved April 17, 2012, from <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/02/world/the-kremlin-and-the-vatican-gorbachev-visits-Pope-at-vatican-ties-are-forged.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>

<sup>329</sup>The Belavezha Accords is the agreement which declared the Soviet Union effectively dissolved and established the Commonwealth of Independent States in its place. It was signed at the state dacha near Viskuli in Belovezhskaya Pushcha on December 8, 1991, by the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine.

<sup>330</sup>Zhosul, E. (2007, March 13). Russia and the Holy See: a new aspect in diplomatic dialogue. *Interfax*. Retrieved March 16, 2012, from <http://www.interfax-religion.com/?act=analysis&div=42>

on the diplomatic front comes at the same time as a warming in previously tense relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Vatican. The Orthodox Church has long accused the Catholic Church of seeking to convert Russians to Catholicism. For the Vatican, its activities in the country cater largely traditional Catholic minorities like Poles, Germans and Lithuanians, who have faced discrimination and persecution in the past. Property disputes between the Churches have also put them at odds. Relations between the Vatican and the Russian Orthodox Church have been tense under Patriarch Alexy. There were difficulties in the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Vatican, especially since 2002, when Pope John Paul II created a Catholic diocesan structure for Russian territory. The leadership of the Russian Church saw this action as a throwback to prior attempts by the Vatican to proselytize the Russian Orthodox faithful to become Roman Catholic. This point of view was based upon the stance of the Russian Orthodox Church (and the Eastern Orthodox Church) that the Church of Rome is in schism, after breaking off from the Orthodox Church. However, relations have improved since the new Metropolitan Kirill assumed the leadership of the Orthodox Church following the death of his predecessor in December 2008.

### *7.2.3. Full Diplomatic Relations Between Russia and the Holy See*

Thanks to the peaceful ecumenical dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church, diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Russia have been raised to a further step. In 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree to establish diplomatic relations with Vatican City, and met with Pope Benedict XVI. Under the decree, the Kremlin stated that Russia's mission in the Vatican will be transformed into an embassy. During his visit to Vatican City, President Medvedev also held talks with State Secretary Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

The Russian President and the Pontiff both gave a positive assessment to the Russian-Vatican dialogue. The decree signed by the president reads:

The Russian Foreign Ministry will hold talks with the Vatican to establish diplomatic relations at the level of the embassy of the Russian Federation in the Vatican and the Apostolic Nunciature in the Russian Federation. Included will be discussion on the transformation of the Russian mission in the Vatican into Russia's embassy to the Vatican.<sup>331</sup>

The Holy Father and President Medvedev also discussed challenges to “security and peace” in the world and “themes of mutual interest such as the value of the family and the contribution of believers to the life of Russia”.

### **7.3. The Model of Vietnam-Vatican relations**

#### *7.3.1. The Historical Visit of Vietnam's Prime Minister to the Vatican*

On April 30, 1975, the Communist Vietnamese reunified North and South Vietnam into the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. From that day, the foreign missionaries were expelled from Vietnam as well as the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Henri Lemaître. At that point, diplomatic ties between the Vatican and Vietnam were severed. However, the Holy See has never ceased to seek diplomatic relations with Vietnam. In fact, relations have improved since 1989 with regular visits by Vatican cardinals and delegations to Vietnam. The Holy See's push to restore diplomatic relations with Vietnam took an important step forward as Pope Benedict XVI met with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung on January 25,

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<sup>331</sup>RIA Novosti. (2009, December 3). Russia establishes diplomatic relations with Vatican. *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved March 21, 2012, from <http://en.rian.ru/world/20091203/157089972.html>



2007 in the Apostolic Palace. The encounter in the Papal library was the first of its kind in decades, thawing tensions that date back to the rise of Vietnamese communism<sup>332</sup>. Indeed, this was a historical meeting since Nguyen Tan Dung has become the first leader of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to meet and hold talks with the Head of the Roman Catholic Church. The Vietnamese leaders have always considered the Church as an integral part of French colonialism, and later of South Vietnam's anti-communist government. In a communiqué, the Holy See expressed its satisfaction for the visit, which marks a new and important step towards the normalization of bilateral relations.<sup>333</sup> In the late 1980s, Vietnam started its “doi moi” (renovation) policy and has proven its ability to integrate into the international community. It is obvious that diplomatic ties with the Vatican will not directly bring economic or political benefits to Vietnam but will help raise Vietnam's status in the world. Then, in order to normalize diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Vietnam, it had been decided by both states to create a Joint Working Group.

### 7.3.2. *The Pope's Non-Resident Envoy to Vietnam*

In 2009, according to the agreement between the Vietnamese Government and the Holy See, the first meeting of the Vietnam-Holy See Joint Working Group was held in Hanoi on February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was for the exchange of views on the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations. The meeting was co-chaired by Nguyen Quoc Cuong, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Monsignor Pietro Parolin, Holy See Under-Secretary for Relations with States. Monsignor Pietro Parolin recognized that positive progress has been made in the religious life in

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<sup>332</sup>TheChristianCentury. (2007, February 20). Vatican strengthens ties with Vietnam but not with China. *The Christian Century*. Retrieved March 22, 2012, from <http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2007-02/vatican-strengthens-ties-vietnam-not-china>

<sup>333</sup>BBCNEWS. (2007, January 25). Vietnamese leader meets pontiff. *BBC News*. Retrieved March 29, 2012, from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6297141.stm>

Vietnam and wished that the remaining unsolved matters in bilateral relations between Vietnam and the Holy See could be settled with goodwill through sincere dialogue. Then, on December 11, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI meeting with the President of Vietnam, Nguyen Minh Triet proved to be another significant stage in the progress of bilateral relations with Vietnam. The Second meeting of the Vietnam-Holy See Joint Working Group took place in the Vatican on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 2010, to strengthen and develop bilateral relations. In January 2011, Pope Benedict XVI appointed an envoy to Vietnam, Msgr. Leopoldo Girelli<sup>334</sup> and expressed his satisfaction in his address to the members of the diplomatic corps:

I would like to point out with satisfaction that the Vietnamese authorities have accepted my appointment of a Representative who will express the solicitude of the Successor of Peter by visiting the beloved Catholic community of that country.<sup>335</sup>

The Vatican's appointment of its first official representative to Vietnam signals a detente between the country's communist rulers and the Catholic Church that could represent the first step towards establishing formal diplomatic relations. Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, currently the Vatican's Nuncio to Indonesia, has been named by the Holy Father as “non-resident pontifical representative” for Vietnam, extending his position as Nuncio in Singapore and Apostolic Delegate to Malaysia and Brunei. The appointment also coincides with the conclusion of the 50th Jubilee anniversary of the Catholic hierarchy in Vietnam and the 350th year since the first two Apostolic vicariates were established there. Hanoi's agreement to the appointment aims to ease

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<sup>334</sup>Pianigiani, G. (2011, January 13). Vatican: Envoy to Vietnam Appointed. *The New York times*. Retrieved April 12, 2012, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/14/world/europe/14webbrfs.html>

<sup>335</sup>BenedictXVI. (2011, January 10). *Address of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps*. Retrieved April 14, 2012, from [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va): [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2011/january/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20110110\\_diplomatic-corps\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2011/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20110110_diplomatic-corps_en.html)

pressure from the United States and the European Union to allow for more religious freedom. According to a 2010 US State Department report, “the Vietnamese constitution provides for freedom of worship; however, government restrictions on the organized activities of many religious groups continued”. The European Union also wants to see greater flexibility from Hanoi towards practicing Catholics – the fifth-largest congregation in Asia.<sup>336</sup> The third meeting of the Vietnam-Holy See Joint Working Group was held in Hanoi, on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 with the presence of Msgr. Leopold Girelli. At the conclusion of the meeting, the two sides came up with an assessment that the Viet Nam – Holy See relationship has attained positive developments on the basis of good will and constructive dialogue, as well as respect for principles in the relationship.<sup>337</sup> The two sides agreed to facilitate the work of Archbishop Girelli, the non-residential pontifical representative so that he can better fulfill his mission.

### 7.3.3. *Nominations of Bishops in Vietnam*

The process of nomination of Bishops in Vietnam is very interesting and may be applied to China. As a matter of fact, regarding the Chinese government's desire to appoint bishops, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, currently the Apostolic Nuncio to Poland, compared it to the situation in Vietnam which occurred several years ago; a similar disagreement was resolved, with the Vatican agreeing to consult with the government over the appointment of bishops but still having the final say<sup>338</sup>. In Vietnam, the Government technically maintains veto power over Vatican

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<sup>336</sup>Tofani, R. (2011, February 3). God and state draw closer in Vietnam. *Asia Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast\\_Asia/MB03Ae01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/MB03Ae01.html)

<sup>337</sup>News.va. (2012, February 28). Holy See-Vietnam conclude meeting. *News.Va the Vatican today*. Retrieved April 21, 2012, from <http://www.news.va/en/news/holy-see-vietnam-conclude-meeting>

<sup>338</sup>Puet, T. (2007, March 13). Vatican diplomat expresses hope for normalizing relations with China. *CatholicNewsService*. Retrieved November 4, 2011, from <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0701419.htm>

appointments of bishops. In early 2007, it exercised that veto authority over the nomination of two bishops. For the most part, however, the Government has, in practice, cooperated with the Catholic Church in nominations for bishops' appointments. Though the Vatican is free to nominate bishops in Vietnam, the Vietnamese government insists that the Holy See inform it about potential bishop nominations. In Vietnam, the Holy See presents several appropriate candidates to the Vietnamese government, which chooses one of them. After considering opinions expressed by the government, it is still the Pope who makes the final decision. Actually, Vatican officials, for years, made annual trips to Vietnam to work out details of the Church's life and freedom to function in the country. The trips included a discussion of every potential bishop's appointment with government officials. The Vatican always insisted that needing government permission to name a bishop was not the usual Vatican procedure, but that it could be tolerated temporarily as Vatican-Vietnamese relations improved.<sup>339</sup>

#### **7.4. Can Sino-Vatican Relations Follow One of These Two Models?**

##### *7.4.1. Difficulties in Applying the Russian-Vatican Model*

In China, the Open Door Policy that was part of the modernization program initiated by Deng Xiaoping at the Party's Third Plenum in December 1978 provided the Vatican with a longed-for opportunity to find out about the real situation in China and formulate a warmer relationship with Beijing. The Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev took the same path of openness when he promoted the perestroika and initiated the glasnost. This overture from Gorbachev has permitted in 2009, full

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<sup>339</sup>Wooden, C. (2012, February 28). Vatican says relations with Vietnam continue to improve. *Catholic Register*. Retrieved April 21, 2012, from <http://www.catholicregister.org/news/international/item/13953-vatican-says-relations-with-vietnam-continue-to-improve>

diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Russia to become a reality. It is therefore legitimate to consider the Russian-Vatican relations as a model to be adopted for China. However, despite China's Open Door policy in 1978, the normalization of Sino-Vatican diplomatic ties are not yet established. The culture and history of Russia have been shaped by Christianity therefore it doesn't consider the Holy See as an imperialist foreign invader. On the contrary, China does not find its roots, essence and spirit in the Christian faith or culture. There is, therefore, a wide cultural gap between the Vatican and China.

Indeed, the PRC was founded on the Communist ideology of Karl Marx and Lenin. Pope John Paul II who came from Poland, a communist country, was one of the main actors in the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. The fact is the so-called *Ostpolitik* and the strategy that the Vatican used for the European countries is not adaptable to Communism with Chinese characteristics. Deng Xiaoping knew the influence of Pope John Paul II and didn't want China to experience the collapse of Poland and the other Eastern European countries. As a result, China is very careful in its overture and the Chinese authorities won't let the Tianamen June 4<sup>th</sup> incident happen again. The religious freedom initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union and the participation of the Orthodox Church toward a fruitful ecumenical dialogue, have widely contributed to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See. This seems impossible for the Patriotic Church of China to play the same role of mediator since it is under the control of the Chinese Communist authorities. The Holy See has a great spiritual mission and its aim is the service of humankind. However, the PRC considers the Vatican only on a political level and in terms of power.

#### 7.4.2. *Limits of the Vietnam-Vatican Model for the Chinese Case*

For the Vatican, good relations with Vietnam are also a sign that they might also be able to reach some agreement with China's Communist leadership. Vietnam and China are both Asian countries and were influenced by the teachings of Confucius. Unlike Russia, Vietnam is culturally closer to China which is why one may suggest taking it as a model. It is even said that the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the United Front of the Central Committee and the National Office for Religious Affairs, should send a delegation to visit the cardinal of Hô Chí Minh Ville to get a better understanding with his help, of the issue of the nomination of bishops in Vietnam.<sup>340</sup> The main obstacle to the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations, for China, is on political control, even though the aim of the Holy See is solely religious. The PRC does not want the Holy Father to have any say on the nomination of the Bishops. Indeed, China considers the nomination of Bishops as a political strategy because the Bishops, by their ministry, have an influence on the people. This desire for exclusive political control is not necessarily connected with conflicts between Communism and Catholicism. To China, it just makes good political sense to make sure that it does not share domestic political authority with another government or authority. For this reason, the Chinese government refuses to consider the “Vietnam model”, which involves the Vatican submitting a list of candidates for bishops to the Vietnamese government, with the Pope making a final decision based in part on the government's opinions. The Chinese government is unlikely to compromise significantly on this issue. However, it may be possible for the Catholic Patriotic Association to agree to provide a list of candidates to the Vatican, and then to make a decision based, in part, on the Vatican's opinions. If so, then the question is whether

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<sup>340</sup> Andreotti, G. (2007, May). China. The Pope's letter and the future of the Catholic Church. *30days*. Retrieved April 23, 2012, from [http://www.30giorni.it/articoli\\_id\\_14517\\_13.htm?id=14517](http://www.30giorni.it/articoli_id_14517_13.htm?id=14517)

the Vatican would be willing to accept this approach. But assuming for a moment that the relationship between the Holy See and the Chinese government is able to overcome this major obstacle and become a normal diplomatic relationship, what effects would that have on the situation facing Catholics in China? Vietnam, unlike China, doesn't have a Patriotic Association like the CCPA, which is why the nomination of Bishops is not such a large issue. For China, it remains a real conflict of authority with the Holy See for the choice of Church leaders. As long as there is no solution for the issue of the nomination of Bishops, it is impossible for the Vatican to send a representative, even a non-resident envoy, to China. China will not give up its so-called two pre-conditions for initiating Sino-Vatican relations. Other scenarios have to be developed in order for ties to be created between the Vatican and China.

#### 7.4.3. *Prospects and Ways Forward*

Vietnam's Vice-Minister of Foreign affairs once expressed his wish for the Holy See's active contribution to the life of the Catholic community in Vietnam, the strengthening of solidarity between religions and of the entire Vietnamese population, and the strong cohesion of the Catholic Church in Vietnam with the nation through practical contributions to national construction. Indeed, Pope Benedict XVI said in one of his letters to Chinese Catholics:

The civil authorities are well aware that the Church in her teaching invites the faithful to be good citizens, respectful and active contributors to the common good in their country, but it is likewise clear that she asks the State to guarantee to those same Catholic citizens the full exercise of their faith, with respect for authentic religious freedom.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Pope Benedict XVI.(2007). *op. cit.*

The Church with its social teachings can be helpful in assisting the poor and disabled, in the administration of kindergartens and health facilities. In fact, the Church can take care of all the social tasks theoretically reserved to state institutions. In participating actively with its charitable catholic spirit, the Church can play an important part in Chinese society and witness that she has the sole desire to be at the service of all men and women. With the economic growth in China and all the problems generated by this phenomenon, the Church can offer her spirituality for the good of the people. Dialogue and patience are certainly highly desirable to persuade China that the mission of the Church is religious and not political. The Church can persuade China to let her participate in society by taking on the social issues. It may help the Chinese Communists realize that the Church has much to offer for the good of China and its people. China may therefore recognize that Catholics are good citizens, willing to contribute to the prosperity and peace of the country. Acting like this, there will be more mutual understanding that will bring mutual trust in order to normalize Sino-Vatican diplomatic relations. In order to reach diplomatic ties, it is certainly important to create ties of cooperation, of trust and of friendship on the practical terrain. If China would allow Catholic communities to collaborate on social peace and social development, it would see how much the Church could do for the common good. As a result, with a better point of view of the Church, China may have more trust and accept the Holy See as a good partner for the construction of Chinese society and Chinese prosperity.

## **7.5. Conclusion**

The real problem remains on Religious Freedom. If the Soviet Union/Russia and Vietnam have succeeded to create ties with the Holy See, it is mainly because



they have permitted more religious freedom. That is why it does not seem possible to apply these two models to China.

The Holy See can offer a social project to China in order to show its good will to not only build a harmonious society but also a spiritual society. With its wisdom and long experience on the social level, the Church has so much to offer to China. Doing this, the Holy See can create a relationship based on cooperation in an atmosphere of confidence. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Pope has appointed many specialists on China to the Roman Curia in order to create a Bridge with the PRC. Thus, he has appointed Cardinal Filoni, an expert in Chinese affairs, as prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and Archbishop Savio Hon, from Hong Kong, secretary of the same Congregation. In February 2012, the Holy Father chose to create Cardinal the Bishop of Hong Kong, John Tong. This decision underlines the importance of the Church of Hong Kong in helping the Church in China. In addition, Cardinal John Tong is working in the same China commission with Cardinal Zen (Hong Kong) and Cardinal Shan (Taiwan). Thus, Pope Benedict XVI shows clearly this goodwill to understand China and to initiate a dialogue based on friendship, peace and trust.

## 8. Conclusion

The Republic of China founded in 1911 established diplomatic relations with the Holy See in 1942. Then, the Nationalist government of the ROC had to leave Mainland China in 1949 following the Chinese Communist Party's victory in the Civil war. Mao Zedong, after proclaiming the People's Republic of China in 1949, expelled the Apostolic Internuncio, Antonio Riberi in 1951. From that day, Sino-Vatican relations have been severed and have not yet been reestablished. Then, Archbishop Riberi moved to Taipei where he installed the Internunciature.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, many foreign states gradually shifted diplomatic recognition to Beijing acknowledging that Taiwan was part of China under the "One-China Policy". This culminated with the People's Republic of China displacing Taiwan in importance at the United Nations, in 1971. The Vatican remains currently the only state in Europe that recognizes the ROC.

Relations between Taiwan and the Mainland have been turbulent, full of tensions and crisis-filled. For the Holy See, diplomatic relations with the PRC were severed in 1951 with the expulsion of Archbishop Riberi. Indeed, the Holy See wants to normalize diplomatic relations with Mainland China because of its vocation to serve all men and women and to proclaim the Gospel in all corners in the World. Throughout the years, the Popes have sent numerous messages to China to initiate a dialogue and normalize Sino-Vatican relations. Pope Benedict XVI wrote a prophetic letter in 2007 to express his care and love for China but this was not warmly received by the Chinese authorities. The PRC has repeatedly answered the calls of the Holy See with the same two pre-conditions. These so called two pre-conditions are:

- The severing of Vatican-Taiwan relations and the recognition of the Chinese Government in Beijing as the sole legitimate government of China
- The non-interference in China's internal affairs which relates principally to the nomination of bishops

The PRC's main concern in engaging rapprochement with the Holy See is to isolate Taiwan. Many have speculated that the Vatican, in order to normalize its diplomatic ties with China, will relocate its Nunciature in Beijing. However, even if the Vatican breaks its relations with Taiwan, it will not be able to establish diplomatic relations with China. Indeed, these two pre-conditions are just a smoke screen, an alibi for China's unwillingness to open a discussion with the Holy See<sup>342</sup>. These pre-conditions, especially the first one, are not the real problem. As Dr. Tou Chou-seng, former ROC ambassador to the Holy See, said: "China uses Taiwan as a pretext, while the real problem is that of religious freedom"<sup>343</sup>.

In this thesis, we have pointed out the real problems that block the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations. Before such a rapprochement between Beijing and the Apostolic See, numerous problems have to be discussed and solved. With different motivations in mind, the Vatican and China expect different, even seemingly irreconcilable, outcomes from the same negotiations. Therefore it is not

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<sup>342</sup>Criveller, G. (2005, Summer). John Paul II and China. *Tripod*, XXV(137), p. 27

<sup>343</sup>Eunice, K. Y. (2005, May 19). Taiwan Remains a Question as Vatican-China Relations Progress. *Christian Today*. Retrieved January 12, 2012, from <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/taiwan.remains.a.question.as.vatican.china.relations.progress./2922.htm>

surprising to find that there are some major issues blocking the way for Sino-Vatican reconciliation. On the negotiation table, issues and cases can be summarized into the following four categories:

- The arrangement to share power between the Vatican and China in appointing Chinese bishops.
- The method in unifying the official and non-official sectors of the Chinese Catholic Church.
- The ways and means whereby the Papal representative in Beijing relates to local Bishops in the future.
- The means for moving the PapalNunciature in Taiwan to Beijing with minimal disturbance and embarrassment to Taiwan.<sup>344</sup>

All these are technical problems; once the basic principles are resolved in the spirit of tolerance, one can consider initiating the normalization of the Sino-Vatican relations.

Despite engaging in dialogue with China and the goodwill of Pope Benedict XVI to adapt to the reality of the Church in China, the situation between the two states has deteriorated 2011 with the illicit episcopal ordinations at Leshan (June 29) and Shantou (July 14). Beijing will continue on its path to ordain bishops without Papal mandate.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup>Leung, B. (2002). Sino-Vatican relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century. In *The International Symposium on the History of Sino-Vatican Diplomatic Relations* (pp. 321-353). Taipei, Taiwan, ROC: Institute of Catholic History, Fugen Catholic University.

<sup>345</sup>Cervellera, B. (2011, July 25). Beijing pontificates against Vatican "threats". *AsianNews.it*. Retrieved Mai 15, 2012, from <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Beijing-pontificates-against-Vatican-threats-22195.html>

The right to freedom of religion is a fundamental right for the Holy See but this right is not respected in China. In this thesis, we have underlined the limits of religious policy in China and its practice. Since June 2011, China has created difficulties for the foreign missionary. The PRC's authorities have blocked nine Catholic priests from entering the Mainland, even though they all had valid visas. Seven were blocked at border control points on the Mainland, and had their entry visas cancelled without explanation. Two were stopped at Beijing's international airport, had their visas cancelled and were put on the next flight back to where they had come from. News of these latest retaliations circulated in diplomatic and Church circles over the summer months. Several of the priests have opted for anonymity, or chosen not to speak publicly about their experiences lest they prejudice their future chances of returning to China, or further aggravate the situation.<sup>346</sup>

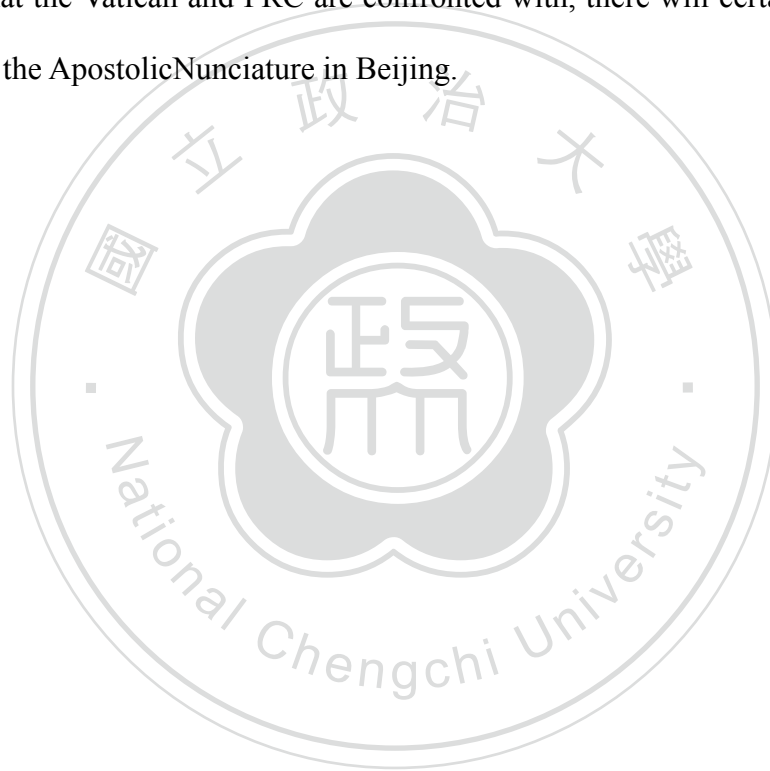
There are certainly still many issues to solve before considering any ties between the Vatican and the PRC. The two models of Vietnam and Soviet/Russia seem not applicable to China which presents different realities, history and context. In the present situation, it is definitely not easy to hypothesize the concrete possibility of a “win-win solution”. Diplomacy and diplomatic relations might be useful but are not essential to the mission of the Church, which is essentially religious and spiritual. The Chinese Church, like many other Churches in the world in different eras, has survived without diplomatic relations. Beijing remains wary of Vatican influence and the Vatican remains distrustful of the CCPA. In order for diplomatic-relations to succeed an element of trust and predictability would be

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<sup>346</sup>O'connell, G. (2011, October 11). China retaliates against the Vatican over the question of bishops. *Vatican Insider*. Retrieved from <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/homepage/world-news/detail/articolo/chiesa-Church-iglesia-cina-china-china-cattolici-catholics-catolicos-8895/>

required. This is something that has been lacking so far<sup>347</sup>. As a path toward diplomatic ties, the Church can try to lead more and more social and cultural activities in China. As a result, there will be more understanding of the Chinese authorities on the pastoral and religious characteristic of the Holy See.

At the present time, diplomatic relations between Taiwan and the Vatican are stable and there won't be any change in a foreseeable future. Considering all the issues that the Vatican and PRC are confronted with, there will certainly not be any move of the ApostolicNunciature in Beijing.



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<sup>347</sup>Smith, H. (2011). *The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Vatican: Prospects for Rapprochement*. Working Papers, Current Issues in Religion and Politics, University of St. Andrews, the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics (CSRP), Scotland, UK. Retrieved February 10, 2012, from <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/CIRPIII%2011120042.pdf>

## Annexes

### Annex 1 : The Diplomatic Representatives of the Republic of China and the Holy See Papal Representatives.

Archbishop Celso Cardinal Constantini	Apostolic Delegate	1922-1933
Archbishop Mario Zanin	Apostolic Delegate	1933-1946
Archbishop Anthony Riberi	Apostolic Internuncio	1946-1959
Archbishop Joseph Caprio	Apostolic Internuncio	1959-1966
	Apostolic Pronuncio	1966-1967
Archbishop Luigi Accogli	Apostolic Pronuncio	1967-1970
Archbishop Edward Cassidy	Apostolic Pronuncio	1970-1971
Msgr. Francesco Colasuonno	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1971-1974
Msgr. Thomas White	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1974-1978
Msgr. Paul Giglio	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1978-1986
Msgr. Piero Biggio	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1986-1989
Msgr. Adriano Bernardini	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1989-1992
Msgr. Juliusz Janusz	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1992-1995
Msgr. Joseph Chennoth	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1995-1999
Msgr. Adolfo Tito Yllana	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	1999-2002
Msgr. James Patrick Green	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	2002-2003
Msgr. Ambrose Madtha	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	2003-2008
Msgr. Paul Fitzpatrick Russell	Chargé d'Affaires a.i.	2008

#### ROC Ambassadors

Shou-Kang Hsieh	Minister Plenipotentiary	1943-1946
Ching Hsiung Wu	Minister Plenipotentiary	1946-1949

Ying Chu	Minister Plenipotentiary	1949-1954
Shou-Kang Hsieh	Minister Plenipotentiary	1954-1959
	Ambassador	1959-1966
Chang-Huan Shen	Ambassador	1966-1969
Chih-Mai Ch'en	Ambassador	1969-1978
Shu-Kai Chow	Ambassador	1978-1991
Sieou-Je Hoang	Ambassador	1991-1993
Edward Tzu-Yu Wu	Ambassador	1993-1996
Raymond R. M Tai	Ambassador	1996-2003
Chou-Seng Tou	Ambassador	2004-2008
Larry Yu-yuan Wang	Ambassador	2008





**Annex 2 : Taiwan Catholic Church Statistics in 2009**

**2009 年臺灣地區天主教會教務統計表**  
**Taiwan Catholic Church Statistics in 2009**

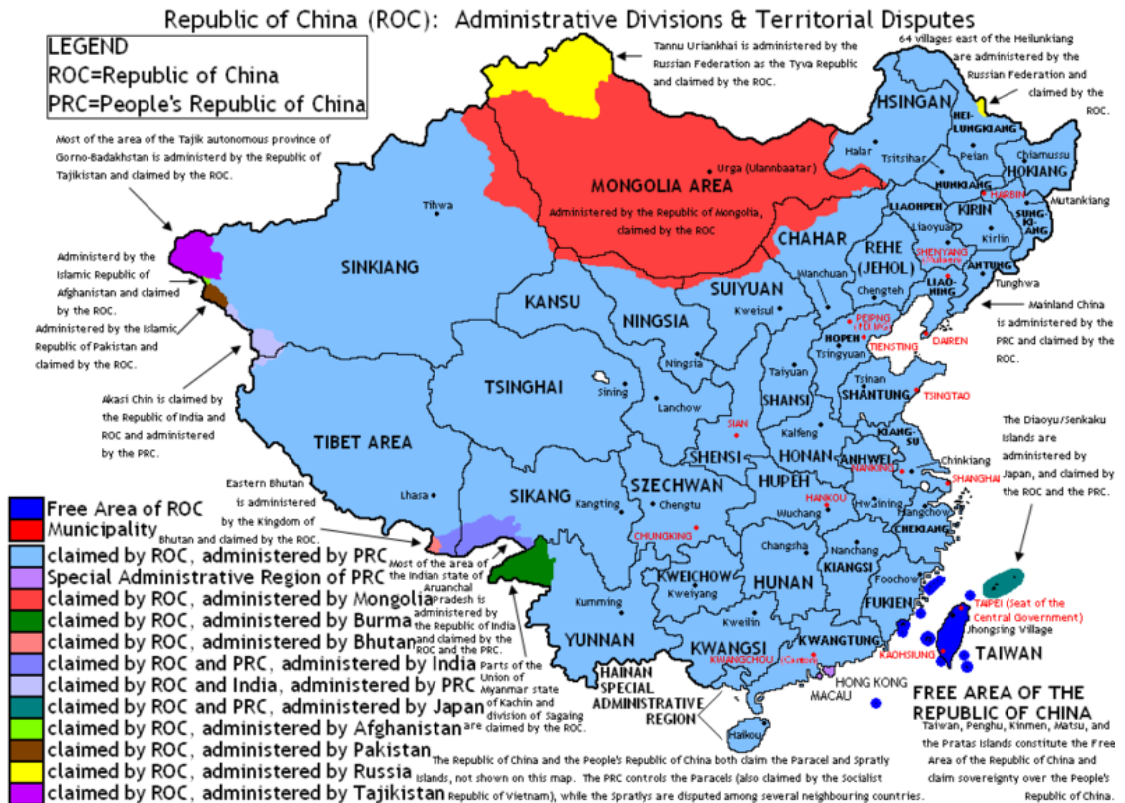
項目 Personnel & Institutes		數目 No. Inst.	人數 Persons
教友 Catholics			299,938
主教 Bishops			15
神父 Priests	教區 Diocesan		259
	會士 Religious		423
	本籍 Chinese		327
	外籍 Foreign		357
修士 Brothers	本籍 Chinese		33
	外籍 Foreign		60
修女 Sisters	本籍 Chinese		775
	外籍 Foreign		278
修院 Seminarians	大修院 Major	2	65
	小修院 Minor	1	21
傳教員 Catechists	男 Men		162
	女 Women		159
總鐸區 Deaneries		51	
堂區 Parishes		378	2
兼管區 Stations		348	
半公開聖堂 Semi-Public Churches		281	

### Annex 3 : Map of Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait



Source: Taiwan Strait Area (Shaded Relief) 1992. The map was produced by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and retrieved from [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/taiwan.gif](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/taiwan.gif)

## Annex 4 : Territory claimed by the Republic of China



Source: Wikimedia. Retrieved from [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ROC\\_Administrative\\_and\\_Claims.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ROC_Administrative_and_Claims.png)

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